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ABSTRACT

This training manual is designed to improve understanding of Chinese American children, their families, and the issues surrounding the assessment process, to assist educators in creating a more appropriate assessment and learning environment for the limited English speaking Chinese American child. Three training modules are included; each module contains an introduction, objectives and outcomes, and the training text which outlines concepts and suggests workshop activities and group discussion topics. "Understanding Chinese Culture" addresses Chinese cultural values and child-rearing practices, adjustment to American school systems, and suggestions for interviewing Chinese American parents as part of the assessment process. "Assessing Language Skills of Limited English Proficient (LEP) Chinese American Students" covers assessment problems, assessing functional English and Chinese language skills, recognizing second language production errors, clues to language disorders in LEP Chinese-speaking children, and adapting speech and language procedures and instruments. An appendix to this section deals with Chinese language characteristics, comparison of English and Chinese speech sound systems, and features of second language acquisition. "Psychoeducational Assessment of the Limited English Proficient Chinese American Child" explores basic concerns in assessment, selection and modification of assessment instruments, observation techniques and approaches, and writing the psychoeducational report. Master copies of handouts are included. (JDD)

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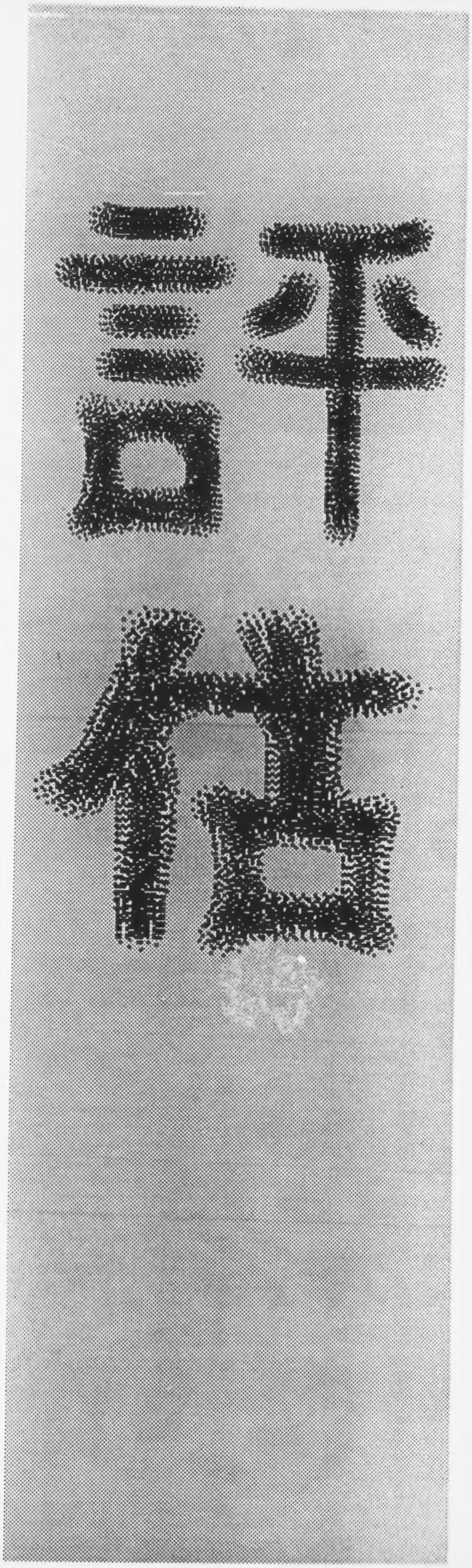
Assessment of Chinese Speaking Limited English Proficient Students With Special Needs



Program, Curriculum, and Training Unit
California State Department of Education
Special Education Division

Assessment of Chinese Speaking Limited English Proficient Students with Special Needs

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1988

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Assessing the Chinese American Child with Limited English Proficiency

What is at Issue?

Diversity in Our School Population

As assessors and educators, we are now seeing an increasing number of children with limited English proficiency (LEP)—many of them, recent refugees coming from Chinese-speaking countries. Yet bilingual resources are limited and this has created new concerns for those of us in education, particularly for those in special education. To understand the children we are educating and families that we work with, we need to first understand their culture. To assess and plan programs for children, we need to know what approaches are appropriate and which ones fall short. We are in essence developing new educational strategies to help meet the diverse needs of California's school population.

Many New Questions — and Unanswered Ones

As many educators are now finding, assessing LEP Chinese American children poses several thorny questions. For example:

- How do you assess differences between children with learning disabilities and limited English proficiency?
- How does Chinese culture differ from American culture?
- Do cultural differences create special considerations in working with families and in determining school needs?
- What assessment instruments are appropriate — and what is available?
- Which assessment instruments and approaches are clearly inappropriate?
- How do you recognize cultural bias in the assessment process?
- How do you assess an LEP Chinese American child if the assessor is not Chinese-speaking?
- Given the inadequacies of our current assessment resources, what is "the next best thing?" What should we work towards?

Unfortunately, there are no pat answers to any of these complex questions. Rather, we have attempted to provide the framework for understanding these issues. Knowing where inadequacies lie is certainly a big step toward finding answers to these questions.

This training program, then, is designed to help educators gain a greater understanding of Chinese American children, their families and the issues surrounding the assessment process. Armed with this knowledge, educators can then apply their skills, their perceptions, and their new knowledge to create a more appropriate assessment and learning environment for the LEP Chinese American child. No doubt, this training will produce more questions than it answers. In fact, the goals of this training program can be nicely summed up by three questions from Immanuel Kant in his constant quest for knowledge:

> What can I know?
>
> What ought I to do?
>
> What may I hope?

Design of This Training Program

This program is designed as a KNOWLEDGE level training and is divided into three modules:

1. **Chinese Culture (1 hour)**
2. **The Psychological Assessment Process (3 hours)**
3. **Language Assessment (3 hours)**

The entire training program is designed to be completed in one day. You may elect to present all three modules, or you may take one or two modules, or sections of modules, to create your own training program geared to the needs of your group. In all instances, we recommend that you use the module on "Culture" as the introductory portion of your training. For example:

For **School Psychologists**, you might want to present:

- The entire module on "Chinese Culture" (1 hour).
- The entire module on "Psychological Assessment" (3 hours).
- Selected portions of the "Language Assessment" module (1-3 hours).

For a group of **Resource Specialists**, you might want to present a half-day workshop, such as the following:

- The entire module on "Chinese Culture" (1 hour).
- Portion of the module on "Psychological Assessment" (1-2 hours).
- Portion of the module on "Language Assessment" (1-2 hours).

For a group of **Speech and Language Clinicians**, you might choose to present the following:

- The entire module on "Chinese Culture" (1 hour).
- Portions of the module on "Psychological Assessment" (1-2 hours).
- The entire module on "Language Assessment" (3 hours).

Module Format

- **Introduction to Each Module**

  Each module contains an introduction which explains the major concepts that will be presented.

- **Objectives and Outcomes**

  Objectives and outcomes are outlined at the beginning of each module. These objectives are also your Section Headings, and each outcome will later be assessed through an end-of-training quiz and evaluation.

- **Training Text**

  Sections covered in each of the modules contain the following:

  - Discussion of concepts.
  - Suggestions for workshop activities.
  - Suggestions for group discussion.
  - Summary of concepts covered.

- **Handouts**

  Master copies ready for reproduction are included for trainer use. Trainer's copies are found within the training text with suggestions for trainers.

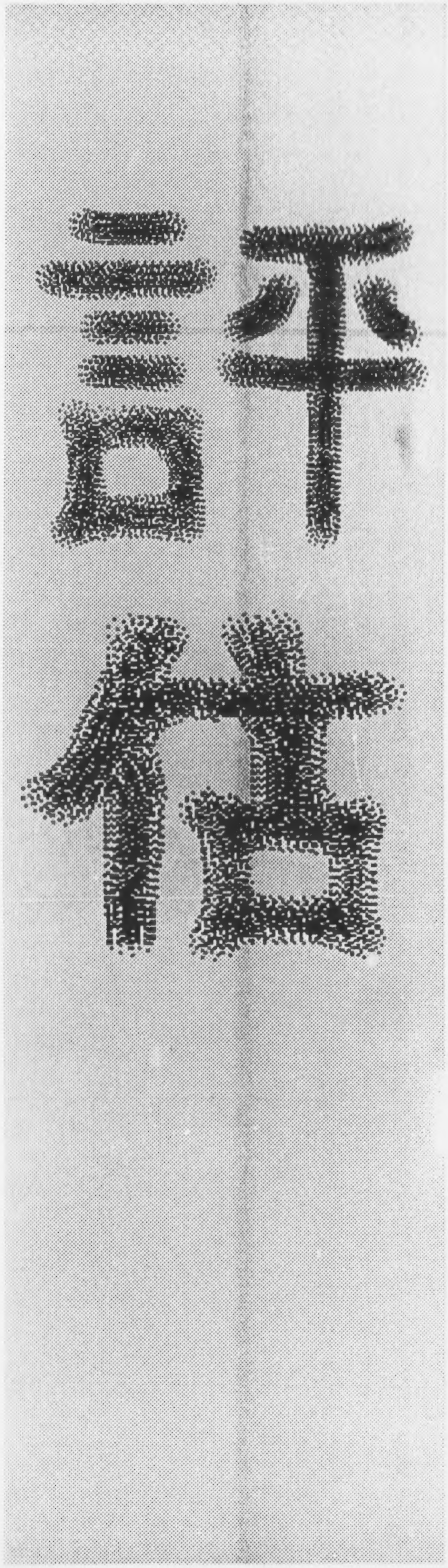
- **Appendix**

  You may wish to refer to additional materials to supplement the training text. In this event, you can use the materials and resource list provided in the appendix which is located at the end of each module. Appendix materials can also be used to expand the training and/or to provide additional resource materials to participants.

- **References**

Module I

Understanding Chinese Culture
(Culture Module)



Understanding Chinese Culture: Introduction for Trainers

This overview of Chinese culture will look at three major areas that affect educators and assessors who work with Chinese American children and their families:

- Chinese cultural values and child rearing practices.
- Adjustment to American school systems.
- Interviewing Chinese American parents as part of the assessment team.

Cultural Differences and Similarities

We often think of cultural differences as "barriers." Yet, barriers are not created by cultural differences, but lack of knowledge or information. We may, for example, find it difficult to work with people whose values are different from ours. But once we understand the basis for those values, we have the key that unlocks understanding.

This chapter then will help participants gain greater awareness of not only cultural differences, but similarities between Chinese and American culture. Participants will discover that Chinese American parents have many of the same reactions and concerns as their American counterparts —although this may be expressed in different ways. We encourage these participants, then, to look at both differences and similarities as an approach to building their own "bridges" that will bring about a better teacher-parent and teacher-child relationship.

Cultural Values and Child Rearing Practices

Emphasis in this section is on cultural diversity among Chinese American parents. We will consider how historical, geographic, socioeconomic, and current environmental factors contribute to the cultural picture.

With this base of knowledge, we will then consider:

- How child-rearing practices tie in with developmental expectations.
- How developmental disabilities affect family dynamics.

Adjusting to American School Systems

This section looks at adjustment as a long-term process. Participants will discover what other factors, besides language, contribute to both confusion and conflicts on the part of the Chinese American child. Specifically, we will consider:

- How two cultural systems can create interpersonal conflicts at both home and school.
- How assessors and educators can facilitate the adjustment process and the harmonious integration of two distinct cultures.

Chinese American Parents as Part of the Assessment Team

Parental input is an important part of the assessment process. When assessors and parents speak two different languages, assessors need to find effective methods to enable Chinese American parents to participate in their child's education. This section will look specifically at:

- Preparing for the interview process: understanding parent expectations, the role of individual family members, and the assessors review of prior medical, developmental and educational information.
- The interview: Effective ways to establish rapport.
- The role of bilingual interpreter/translators in parent interviews.

Trainers may wish to supplement materials covered in this module with more detailed information on specific cultural groups from different countries, e.g. China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia. There is obviously much more to learn about cultural diversity than is possible to present in a single workshop.

Understanding Chinese Culture Objectives and Outcomes

OBJECTIVE 1: Participants will develop a framework for understanding cultural differences and similarities.

OUTCOME 1.1 Participants will know at least five (5) factors influencing cultural diversity.

OBJECTIVE 2: Participants will develop a framework for understanding the Chinese American family's value system.

OUTCOME 2.1 Participants will be able to identify at least three (3) areas of information that can help them understand the Chinese American family's value system.

OUTCOME 2.2 Participants will be able to identify similarities between Chinese American's responses to handicapped conditions and those of non-Chinese American parents.

OBJECTIVE 3: Participants will develop a framework for understanding bicultural conflicts in school adjustment.

OUTCOME 3.1 Participants will be able to name three (3) reasons why bicultural conflicts and school adjustment problems arise for both the parent and the child.

OUTCOME 3.2 Participants will identify three (3) strategies that can help Chinese American families and children adjust to the American school system.

OBJECTIVE 4: Participants will understand how to include Chinese American parents as part of the assessment team.

OUTCOME 4.1 Participants will know three (3) reasons why Chinese American parents may find it difficult to participate in the assessment interview.

OUTCOME 4.2 Participants will identify three (3) considerations in preparing for an interview.

OUTCOME 4.3 Participants will identify three (3) criteria for selecting an interpreter/translator for parent interviews.

Training Text

Understanding Cultural Differences and Similarities

OBJECTIVE 1: Participants will develop a framework for understanding cultural differences and similarities.

OUTCOME 1.1 Participants will know at least five (5) factors influencing cultural diversity.

What Do We Mean By 'Chinese Culture?'

First, when we speak of any cultural or ethnic group, we should not simply refer to a racial grouping of shared physical characteristics. It is also not enough to merely refer to country of origin, since countries share many different cultures. There are many other factors that determine *ethnicity*. These factors relate more to common characteristics within a *community*. In the United States, for example, American people are characterized by many different cultural groups. We are not only a country with people who are Chinese, Mexican, Italian, Black, Jewish, Russian, Irish, and so forth. We are also many groups of people who may share differences and similarities based on our birthplace, educational upbringing, socioeconomic standing, and political, religious, and moral beliefs.

In other words, we can be very general in talking about culture, or we can become very precise. Understanding an individual whose culture is different from ours requires that we become more precise and look at those factors that make up that person's culture. This is especially critical, when working with handicapped children and their families. We may find quite striking differences among Chinese American families. To work effectively with these families, we need more background information. In a sense, we need to become "cultural detectives" and get more information in the following areas:

[TRAINER NOTE]: Provide attendees with handout "Factors of Cultural Diversity." Encourage participants to make notes in each area.

Factors of Cultural Diversity

1. Country and Region Origin

Chinese American families may have come from Taiwan, Hong Kong, the People's Republic of China (PRC), Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, North Vietnam or South Vietnam, to name some of the more common countries of origin. Within countries, such as the PRC, you will find differences among regions. Cultural differences exist between those from Shanghai and those from Canton, for example.

2. Language Background

Chinese is a language of many dialects, many of which are not mutually intelligible. In California, the main dialects spoken within Chinese American communities are Cantonese and Toishanese — which are both dialects of the Guantung province — and Mandarin and its subdialects. With recent increased immigration from other countries, you may work with Chinese American families representing many different Chinese dialects.

3. Socioeconomic Background

Socioeconomic factors also determine cultural values. As a more obvious example, an upper income family from a very cosmopolitan city with European influence, such as Hong Kong or Singapore will likely be culturally different from a lower-income family originating from a rural region in North Vietnam.

4. Educational Background

You will want to determine the educational level and experience of both the parents and the child. We will discuss this further in our section on "School Adjustment."

5. Immigration History

You need to understand when the family arrived and the reasons for immigrating. Was it to join other family members? To seek better job-earning possibilities? To seek political refuge? To take advantage of educational opportunities? Bear in mind that many Vietnamese refugees are first routed to resettlement countries, such as Hong Kong, the Philippines, and Thailand, prior to coming to the United States. As an example, the Chinese parents may have cultural values of the North Vietnamese village they resided in. They may have fled to Thailand to wait for permission to immigrate to the United States. In the meantime, their child or children may have been born and raised in Thailand.

Understanding the Chinese American Family's Value System

OBJECTIVE 2:	Participants will develop a framework for understanding the Chinese American family's value system.
OUTCOME 2.1	Participants will be able to identify at least three (3) areas of information that can help them understand the Chinese American family's value system.
OUTCOME 2.2	Participants will be able to identify similarities between Chinese American's responses to handicapped conditions and those of non-Chinese American parents.

What Type of Information Can Help Us Understand the Chinese American Families With Whom We Work ?

Introduction

Now that we have a general overview of different cultural influences, we can now look at specific cultural differences and similarities in the area of *child-rearing practices.* As we have already discussed, each family will have its unique cultural differences. But among families, we may see general similarities — or *cultural themes.* Understanding these themes and how they relate to child-rearing practices can help us work more effectively with Chinese American parents.

An Example of Cultural Themes

To give you a better understanding of cultural themes, let's look at an American cultural theme: individual freedom and equality. This cultural theme is represented in many ways in the United States. It is expressed in our Constitutions and in our legal system. With respect to child rearing, we often see an emphasis from birth to help the child grow up to become an independent individual. Of course, there are different degrees to which this theme is actually manifested in individual families. In summary then, we may see general similarities in cultural themes, and specific differences among groups and individuals in how these themes are carried out. We will now discuss some examples of cultural themes within the Chinese culture.

The Chinese American Family's Value System

As with American culture, many Chinese cultural themes have historical and/or political origins. "Traditional" Chinese culture is seen as the values that derived from Confucian teaching — which were developed over 2000 years ago. Without a doubt, Confucianism has left its mark on Chinese culture, Confucian philosophy and values were practiced in China until the 1940's, when the Communists took over. Confucianism was felt to be incompatible with Communism and so fell out of favor; yet, it is difficult to erase an ancient culture overnight. While Confucian teachings and traditions in China are not nearly as pervasive as they were 40 years ago — and have undergone modern modifications — they often appear as the basis for cultural values in many Chinese-speaking countries.

While there are many exceptions to every generalization, you might find the more traditional Confucian values practiced in Taiwan more so than the People's Republic of China (PRC) and Hong Kong. They may be more prevalent in rural villages than in large metropolitan cities; they may be more evident in the values of less educated families. They may be still adhered to by families in which older individuals (grandparents or those from another generation) still have family authority.

Unfortunately, we are not able to give you a complete background on Confucian philosophy. But let's briefly consider some "traditional" Chinese themes in child-raising and how these might vary from family to family.

The Child Within the Chinese Family Hierarchy

In contrast to the American theme of equality, "traditional" Chinese values place importance on *specific roles* and *responsibilities*, and both of these are *hierarchically defined* in the traditional Chinese family. However, several factors may alter the "pecking order" of this hierarchy somewhat. These factors include

- The impact of immigration
- Socio-economical influences in the new or changing societies
- Political changes.

As a result, families that you actually encounter in the United States may not adhere to this hierarchy. But what is important is the concept of specific roles and responsibilities and how these two factors may contribute to the family's child-rearing practices.

[TRAINER'S NOTE]: Distribute handout entitled "The Hierarchy Within a Traditional Chinese Family." Point out that from a theoretical framework, the unaltered hierarchy might look something like this.

The Hierarchy Within a Traditional Chinese Family

1. **Grandparents**: Accorded the most respect and authority; in more traditional families, this generation lives with their son's family; the daughter-in-law must respect her mother-in-law's wishes, even in household and child-rearing matters.

2. **Father**: Has responsibility for all family members; has absolute respect from children; has more authority than mother.

3. **Mother**: Must give deference to husband and grandparents; has responsibility for upbringing of children, and particularly for instilling proper social values.

4. **Oldest son**: Also called "big brother" by other siblings; defers to parents; has responsibility for care and behavior of youngest siblings; as a son, also has heavy responsibility for setting good examples; may be scolded if younger siblings go astray; may be expected to make sacrifices for the sake of younger siblings.

5. **Middle daughter**: Also called "little sister" by older brother, and "big sister" by younger siblings; defers to parents and older brother. Shares in responsibility of younger siblings; as a girl, also has responsibilities for routine care such as dressing, feeding, and safety of younger siblings.

6. **Youngest son**: Also known as "little brother," defers to parents and older siblings; responsibility is to listen, obey and do well by following examples set by older siblings; may be chastised for not following advice of older siblings.

How the Handicapped Child Might Impact on the Family Structure

It is important to understand each family member's roles and responsibilities when working with more traditional families, since the *role* of the handicapped child may in many ways determine his or her *impact* on *family dynamics*. Specific roles may stay in effect even after children reach adulthood. That is, the older siblings still maintain responsibility over younger siblings, and the younger generation must yield to the authority of the older generation.

As we can also see by the outlined general responsibilities, the traditional Chinese family is intimately tied together by defined roles. Each member must live in a way that brings honor to the ancestors and the family name. In this respect, the child is not viewed as an *individual* who will someday make his or her own mark in the future. Rather, the child is another *extension of many family generations*, the product of that family and ancestry. Should any member of the family have shortcomings, that individual would disgrace the entire family — and the ancestors. The family then is the most important unit.

Variations Among Families

The above shows a composite of the traditional Chinese family. There may still be many variations of this theme among the Chinese American families with which we work. In the PRC, the family unit has been de-emphasized in favor of the country under communist guidance as the unit. Yet, with families from the PRC, there may still be strong family ties with an emphasis on defined roles and responsibility. Instead of an emphasis on what the individual can contribute to the family, there is more of an emphasis on contributions to the country. Family pride, however, may still be quite strong. With families coming from more Westernized cities, such as Hong Kong and Singapore, there may be less adherence to these traditional values.

Also present may be recent changes or disruptions in the family unit, particularly among refugee families. Individual survival, harsh economic realities, and family hardships may make it difficult to preserve the ideal family unit. Hence, you may be working with fragmented family units, ones in which family members have been separated.

Clues to Understanding Individual Family Values

[TRAINER NOTE]: Pass out handout "Clues to Understanding the Family's Value System." Review this area using a blackboard or overhead projector. Pose questions given in the handout, and lead group to making observations as noted in your script.

Clues to Understanding Individual Family Values

You might be able to get a sense of how traditional or non-traditional the family's values are by gathering more information in these three areas:

Handout	***Trainer Note***
1) Which family member(s) are involved in making decisions about the handicapped child?	
QUESTION: If you find out that the grandmother makes many decisions about the care of the child, what is that a clue of?	*It is a clue that the family is more traditional and gives authority to the older generation on the father's side.*
2) Which family member(s) have an active role in the care and guidance of the child?	
QUESTION: If you find out that both the father and mother share in the care and guidance of the handicapped child, what is that a clue of?	*It is a clue that the family is perhaps less traditional and more non-traditional — or has been altered by circumstances.*
3) What responsibilities are placed on both siblings and the handicapped child?	
QUESTION: If you find the handicapped child has few or no responsibilities, and that an older brother and sister are responsible for the handicapped child's actions, what is that a clue of?	*It is a clue that this is a more traditional family. Older siblings have defined roles for the care of younger — or less capable siblings.*

Similarities in How Traditional and Non-Traditional Parents View Handicapping Conditions and Use Coping Strategies

Similarities in How Chinese React

Chinese American parents may react in much the same way as Caucasian parents in discovering their child has a handicapping condition — that is, they may look for a cause and a cure. Both Chinese and Caucasian American parents need counseling during this period to help them adjust. However, what traditional Chinese Americans express during counseling may be quite different. Because counseling services by bilingual therapists may not be readily available, Chinese American parents with limited English proficiency may find it more difficult to accept counseling and information than their Anglo counterparts. In addition, depending on the family's circumstances and values, more traditional families may find it difficult to express their concerns and fears to a non-Chinese counselor.

Shame Associated with Blame

As we have already discussed, the child in a highly traditional family is seen as the outcome of many generations of the family and of the family's own training. Thus, within more traditional families, the discovery that a child has a handicapping condition may be met with shame and guilt. This may be especially true when the child has a handicap that is not physically discernible — for example, a mild learning disability or emotional disorder. The parents may feel that such developmental problems are the result of improper training on their part. When the child's handicaps are more apparent to both the parent and the public, the Chinese American parent may also experience a sense of social shame in viewing the child's problem as a "stigma" — one that reflects on the entire family's background. These feelings may have their roots in beliefs as to what caused the child's handicapping condition.

Group Discussion/Workshop Activity

We have numerous examples of perceived causes that may be part of the traditional Chinese American family's belief system. As we review these areas, keep in mind that they should not be seen as generalizations of all Chinese American families. We can however, see similarities in the type of response that many parents — both Chinese American and Anglo American — have in reacting to handicapping conditions. As we review these examples,we will also discuss what some of those similarities might be.

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[TRAINER NOTE]: Pass out handout "Similarities in Coping Strategies Between Traditional and Less Traditional Parents." Pose questions given in the handout and lead the group to making observations such as those given in the script.

Similarities in Coping Strategies Between Traditional and Westernized Parents

Handicaps Representing Divine Punishment

The child's handicapping condition may be perceived as direct punishment by the gods for transgressions committed by either the parents or ancestors. Parents who hold this view may react in one of two ways. First, they may feel that nothing can be done — this is their "karma." Or they may feel that an appeal to the gods might "cure" the child. In the latter case, the parents may employ religious customs to amend their past wrong-doing. What parents actually do depends on their religious beliefs and the perceived wrong-doing.

[GROUP DISCUSSION]: How might this be similar to Anglo American parents' reactions upon first learning their child has a handicapping condition?

[TRAINER NOTE]: Lead the group to the following types of insights:

A. Anglo American parents with religious backgrounds may view the child's disability as "God's will."

B. Anglo American parents may feel that the child's disability has a divine message — one of inspiration to other family members or church members.

C. Anglo American parents may feel that the child's disability is a form of punishment and that atonement is necessary for past sins.

D. Anglo American parents may resort to prayer or "spiritual healings" in hopes the child will be cured.

E. These beliefs are based on guilt, associated with the idea of religious wrong-doings.

So, we can see, the Chinese American parents' reactions may be quite similar to those of Anglo American parents. How these are expressed, however, may vary according to the specific cultural – and in this case, religious – beliefs of each family.

Handicaps as the Result of Demonic Possession

Another traditional belief is that evil spirits, such as a demon, occupy the child's soul. While this belief is seldom encountered among less traditional parents or among Anglo American parents, those who hold such beliefs may seek "cure" by prayers or meditation, or they may seek help from a higher source, such as a monk or priest, who they feel may be able to drive the demon out of the body.

[GROUP DISCUSSION]: How is this similar to beliefs that Anglo American parents may have?

[TRAINER NOTE]: Lead the group discussion to the following points.

A. While uncommon, some Anglo American families may believe in soul possession by a demon or the spirit of a deceased family member.

B. Anglo American parents who hold such beliefs may contact an "exorcist" who can help rid the household or the child of the evil spirit.

C. Both Chinese American and Anglo American parents who hold such beliefs may be denying the permanency of the child's handicap. They may be unable to come to grips with the reality of the disability, and are rationalizing its cause as supernatural. This also leaves open the hope for an eventual cure.

Handicaps as Related to Some Form of Behavior During Pregnancy

Some Chinese American families may attribute a birth defect or handicapping condition as the result of the parents' behavior during the pregnancy. Often the mother is seen as the parent at fault. For example, one mother, a seamstress, whose child was born with a cleft palate, blamed her constant use of scissors during pregnancy as the source of the child's birth defect. In another family, the child's grandparents blamed the mother's frequent outburst of temper as the reason why the child was physically disabled.

With less traditional Chinese American families, you may find health or dietary indiscretions cited as a cause for the child's disabilities.

[GROUP DISCUSSION]: How is this response similar to those of Anglo American parents?

[TRAINER NOTE]: Lead the group to discussing the following points.

A. Parents may feel their actions or emotions during pregnancy are to blame, e.g. attending a rock concert with loud music, horseback riding or swimming, or even seeing a horror movie.

B. Parents may also cite environmental or dietary causes, e.g. exposure to harmful chemicals, failure to follow dietary recommendations, use of aspirin or other drugs during pregnancy.

C. Whatever parents cite as causes — whether real or imagined — the common thread with both Chinese and Anglo American parents may be a sense of personal responsibility and guilt toward the child's disability.

Handicaps Due to Physiological Imbalance

Traditional Chinese medicine views mental and physical health as a balance of the forces of yin and yang. Parents who follow these traditional medical views may attempt to see the child's disability as an imbalance of these forces. They may seek a cure in the form of acupuncture or herbal medicine.

[GROUP DISCUSSION]: How is this similar to Anglo American parents' beliefs in medical causes of handicapping conditions?

[TRAINER NOTE]: Lead the group to discussing the following points.

A. Parents may believe that disabilities can be attributed directly to some medical causes. Once the reason is uncovered, a solution can also be given.

B. Instead of the imbalance of yin and yang, Anglo American parents may feel other health imbalances are affecting the child, e.g. the presence of chemical additives in food products.

With both Chinese and Anglo American parents, we may see similarities in their search for medical reasons for the disability — seeking medical hope for a cure.

Handicaps Viewed as Laziness

If the child has a mild handicap — especially one that is not discovered until the child is older — some parents mistake the source of the child's problem as one of laziness. To correct the "laziness" problem, parents may have the child take on extra homework or put the child on a strict tutorial schedule until specific skills are mastered.

[GROUP DISCUSSION]: How is this response similar to that of some Anglo American parents?

[TRAINER NOTE]: Have the group make the following types of responses.

A. Some parents may feel the child is unmotivated, lazy, bored, being negatively influenced by peers, or just "going through a stage."

B. Parents may feel that some change in the child's schooling may bring about better results. Changes may include more homework, a home tutor, a different classroom, a different school, or a different educational approach.

C. It is natural for all parents to look at possible underlying reasons for their child's poor performance; however, if parents remain too long in this stage, they may be denying the actual cause of the disability and blame the child for being disabled.

Understanding Bicultural Conflicts

OBJECTIVE 3:	Participants will develop a framework for understanding bicultural conflicts in school adjustment.
OUTCOME: 3.1	Participants will be able to name three (3) reasons why bicultural conflicts and school adjustment problems arise for both the parent and the child.
OUTCOME 3.2	Participants will identify three (3) strategies that can help Chinese American families and children adjust to the American school system.

Reasons Why Bicultural Conflicts and School Adjustment Problems Arise

Both Chinese American children and families may experience confusion, conflicts or difficulties in adjusting to the American school system. The reasons for this may be found in these general areas:

- Language differences.
- Bicultural differences in *roles of school professionals.*
- Differences in the *availability of educational services* and how these services are delivered.
- Bicultural differences in *learning environments* and how students interact with teachers.
- Bicultural differences in the *educational and social expectations* of Chinese American parents, the child's American peers and American educators.

We will now discuss what these differences are and what conflicts may arise that may make adjustment to the American school system a difficult process.

Language Differences

We will be discussing how language areas may affect the overall assessment and educational process in our section on "Language Assessment." However, there are some general points that educators and assessors need to bear in mind when working with Chinese-speaking parents.

First, when we refer to "Chinese-speaking" families, we are actually talking about many language groups — as we have already pointed out in the first part of this workshop. Chinese-speaking families come from many different countries and may speak different dialects from family to family. The major areas from which immigrants originate are: Hong Kong, the People's Republic of China, Taiwan, and Vietnam. The recent wave of immigrants originated from Vietnam, however, they may have been "routed" to other relocation countries, such as Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

The Chinese-speaking families that we see, then, may actually speak several different dialects or languages. For example, an ethnic Chinese child who was born in Vietnam may have learned both Vietnamese and Cantonese in the school, and Mandarin in the home. He or she may have then relocated with the family to Singapore and picked up additional Chinese dialects, depending on how long the family remained in that host country.

Thus, in working with Chinese-speaking families, we need to keep several points in mind:

- The dialect the child speaks most fluently is not necessarily the dialect the parents speak fluently.
- If you have several Chinese-speaking families in your school, they might not all speak the same dialect or language. You need to ask the parents what language is spoken in the home, rather than assuming that it is the language of their country of origin.

In most Chinese-speaking countries, English is taught as a second language. Because of English historical influences, many countries, such as Hong Kong and Singapore, have a high percentage of people who speak English. So it may not be unusual to find some of the parents you work with have some understanding of English. Many of these parents may have come from more metropolitan areas.

But what about the parents who speak little or no English? Obviously, you will have difficulties communicating with them without the assistance of an interpreter. (Choosing an interpreter is a very important area and we will devote more time to this topic in our section on "The Interview Process.") When a parent speaks little or no English, the adjustment process may take longer. You may find it difficult to involve the parent in the child's educational program.

[GROUP DISCUSSION]: Let's look at some specific areas of the child's program and see how language differences might make it difficult for parents to participate.

[TRAINER NOTE]: Introduce the area and ask participants to contribute specific examples from their experience or expectations of how language might affect parent participation. Some suggested areas of discussion are provided in this script.

1. **Parent Groups.**

   Non-English-speaking parents may never hear of these meetings because they cannot read the notices sent out to parents. They may be reluctant to attend if meetings are conducted in English. If meetings are conducted in one Chinese dialect, those parents who speak another dialect may feel lost or ignored. If parents do attend meetings, they may feel isolated from other parents.

2. **Teacher-Parent Meetings.**

   Parents may not understand the implications of the meeting. Parents who speak some English may not understand all the terminology that is used, e.g. "special education," "assessment," "developmentally disabled," "learning environment," "assessment," "cognitive areas." Parents may not provide input to these meetings, even though they may have many questions or much valuable information to contribute. Rather than becoming embarrassed by their lack of English proficiency, parents may prefer not to say anything. Keep in mind that parents who speak or understand some English may not inform you when they do not understand a point that is being made. At the same time, educators and assessors may erroneously get the impression that parents are not aware of, or interested in their child's needs because parents cannot express this information clearly.

3. **Community Services.**

   Families may experience more difficulties understanding and using services, such as the Regional Centers, daycare, counseling services, health screening programs, nutritional programs, referral sources, and public transportation.

The Role of Professionals: A Chinese American's Viewpoint

Reluctance in Seeking Outside Professional Help

Many Chinese families pride themselves on self-sufficiency; family needs are taken care of within the family. In more traditional homes, you might find large extended families in which diverse needs are easily handled by different family members — be it health, childcare, or educational needs. Such needs are handled within the family, not for money-saving reasons, but because of family values. In fact, some Chinese families complain that Westerners have little regard for the family and they may cite as evidence of this, the American's tendencies to turn to "outsiders" for help, instead of the family. This reluctance to turn to "outsiders" — both Anglo and Chinese — is expressed in one Chinese saying: "Sweep your own porch."

In traditional Chinese American families, you may find each family member has a role to play in meeting family needs. For example, a grandparent or older aunt living in the home may take on childcare responsibilities rather than having the child attend a daycare center. An older sister may be given responsibility for tutoring a younger sibling with school problems rather than having the child seek special school services. An uncle who is a dentist may be consulted for advice on all health needs rather than an outside physician or psychologist. Thus, within more traditional families, outside help may not be sought except in extreme cases. In these instances, such families may experience some shame in not being able to satisfactorily manage the problem at home. This shame and "loss of face" may be more acute with the family member who is responsible for handling that area of family need.

How Chinese American Families May Approach Professionals

By the time Chinese American families seek professional help, they may be in a more acute state of distress than Anglo American parents who may seek professional help more routinely. If you are dealing with a recent immigrant family, you should consider how the family may view the meeting. They may approach it with a deep sense of gravity, even if you initiated the meeting. If parents are simply informed that a meeting with the psychologist was necessary, it may cause disharmony within the home prior to the meeting. The child may be blamed for causing trouble. An aunt providing childcare may feel shame in not keeping her charge better disciplined.

Fear and Distrust of Professionals

We need to face the possibility that some families may view us with distrust and/or fear. This may be particularly true with families coming from less Westernized countries, those that immigrated for political reasons, and those who may have family members who arrived in the United States illegally.

Families from more rural and less Westernized countries may simply be unaccustomed to dealing with non-Chinese individuals. As many of us have experienced from time to time, being in an unfamiliar place with unfamiliar people leaves us vulnerable to fears. We may worry that people are judging our manners, appearance, use of the language, our intelligence and values. Unfortunately, it is difficult to dispel these fears. They are perhaps best overcome by ensuring that such families have positive interactions with professionals.

Families that have immigrated for political reasons may fear their security as residents in the United States. By the same token, families may be reluctant to talk to school "officials" if one or more family members are in the United States illegally or if immigration papers contain incorrect information. Some families, for example, may list their children as being a year or two younger than they actually are. This enables children to "catch up" more easily as they adjust to American schools. Some families may not understand the relationship between the government and schools. They may fear that the child's problems at school may jeopardize their immigration status with the government. Immigration policies in the past, for example, did not allow family members with handicapping conditions or certain health problems to enter the United States. If you sense this is the case with a family you are working with, you may want to assure them that all school information is held strictly confidential and that their child's performance at school has nothing to do with their residency status. If this issue is not directly addressed, but you sense this may be a fear of the family, you may want to make positive references to the future, e.g. "When Chang starts high school two years from now, he will have a chance to try out many different American sports."

Still another reason for the Chinese American family's distrust of White American professionals lies in both past and current discriminatory treatment. As recently as 1952, exclusion laws, court rulings, and provisions in the California Constitution prohibited Chinese Americans from voting, becoming citizens, owning land, testifying against Whites, attending the same schools as Whites, and marrying Whites. Up until the 1960's, many Chinese families also experienced frequent instances of discrimination in trying to find both housing and jobs.

Unfortunately, such discrimination still continues today. Contrary to the popular belief that Asians on the whole have fared exceptionally well in the job market, there are relatively few Chinese Americans in managerial or supervisory positions in relation to those with relatively high educational attainment.

What Parents Expect of Professionals

Some Chinese American parents may view professionals as "authority" figures, since this is the role professionals may have in some Asian countries. Professionals may be seen as those who have ultimate decision-making power, as well as an ability to find answers and ready solutions to difficult problems. Parents may come to professionals with a very specific problem, such as "My child cannot read well." They may expect professionals to have immediate and concrete answers, e.g. "He has been reading the wrong books. Have him read these books instead."

Consequently, you may find some Chinese American parents have very high expectations of professionals. If those expectations are not met, then the professional's credibility with the family may suffer. The professional, for example, who ignores the recent immigrant parents' beliefs in folk medicine such as the use of herbs or hot coins on the skin to reduce fever — may cease to be respected in other areas as well.

While many Chinese American parents consider it their responsibility to be involved in their child's education at home, they may see school as the educator's "territory." They may expect educators to come up with highly prescriptive approaches to education. These expectations may create confusion on the parents' part if professionals provide "alternatives" which require that parents decide which approach to take. The parent may try to "second-guess" which alternative pleases the professional the most. Parents may decline to make choices, deferring to the judgement of the professional.

Differences in the Availability of Services and How These Services are Delivered

It is difficult for parents to be advocates for their own children when they are not aware of their rights and the types of services that are available. Even with our English-speaking parents, we find the need to get across a lot of information about procedures, policies, laws, and new or discontinued resources that affect the child's education. You can imagine how much more difficult it is to get this information across to recent immigrant parents who know little of the system and the language.

Let's briefly examine what some of these differences may be, and how they may affect the Chinese American family's uses of American educational services.

Special Education

In some countries, the People's Republic of China, for example, "special education" is not an educational approach. In other words, there may not be enough special services available for children with special needs. The child with mild mental retardation may be integrated into a class with younger children. Or the child may be kept at home or in community daycare centers that do not provide formal education. But special education and training for children, say with orthopedic handicaps, may not exist. In one sense, the PRC's approach truly captures the spirit of "mainstreaming." But, on the other hand, children who require additional services outside of the regular classroom may not receive that type of help. In working with Chinese American parents, you may need to explain the concept of special education. This may not be well received by some Chinese American parents who have strong cultural feelings about having children "stand out" because of problems.

Teachers and Other Professionals

In the United States, we have many professional groups with sub-specialty areas. Physicians include general practitioners, internists, cardiologists, and so forth. In education, we have teachers, resource specialists, administrators, psychologists, teacher's aides, and speech and language specialists. Each "sub-specialist" has his or her own roles that tie in with the child's entire educational program. In Asian countries, these "sub-specialty" areas may be allocated differently. You might find, for example, that a child with problems in the cognitive, sociopersonal or behavioral areas will be referred to a physician. Children who have hearing impairments or communication disorders may be taught by the regular classroom teacher, rather than being referred for assessments and therapy with a speech and language clinician. Consequently, parents may not clearly understand the role of each educational sub-specialist. They may not understand the role the teacher's aide has compared to that of the psychologist.

Differences in Learning Environments

Now, let's consider how adjustment problems may arise for the recent immigrant child entering the American school system for the first time. While we can anticipate what might be a problem area for a child, we need to look at each child individually and determine what specific problems that child might encounter. Knowing this information is important for two reasons:

A child having adjustment problems may present "functional" problems in the classroom, and these may be misinterpreted as learning problems of a different nature. Similarly, a child who has true functional problems in, say, socio-personal areas, may be overlooked as simply having "normal" school adjustment problems.

If we understand what these adjustment areas include, we can work toward a smoother transition for the child.

Adjustment problems might arise for any child entering an unfamiliar school situation. Every child goes through a transition period of "learning the ropes," so to speak — from knowing where the bathroom is located, how to ask for permission, how to be included in peer play, and so forth. For the recent immigrant child, the transition process may be longer, particularly if conflicts arise between adjusting to school and peer expectations and adhering to parent expectations.

In helping the child adjust to the American school system, educators and assessors need to understand both the child's past and current educational experiences and expectations.

Educational Experiences

To understand more about the child's past educational experiences, you may need to interview the parents. It is not enough to assume that children from one country have had a similar set of educational experiences. Teacher formats and classroom expectations differ from school to school. In addition, you may find yourself working with Chinese children who previously lived in rural areas that provided little in the way of formal classroom experiences. By the same token, some recent refugee children may have spent years at refugee camps where less emphasis was placed on education.

Let's now consider three ways in which educational experiences may be different in Asian countries from our experiences in American classrooms:

1. Differences in instructional approach
2. Differences in learning materials
3. Differences in student-teacher interactions.

The Asian Classroom: Some Possible Differences From Their American Counterparts

Differences in Instructional Approaches

You may work with children whose school experiences have included much emphasis on rote memorization. This is not to say that all knowledge learned by these students is learned by memory only and without any basis on conceptual thinking and other skills. Rather, rote memorization may be used to a greater degree as a disciplined exercise and instructional approach. As with many areas, there is great diversity in what methods are used from school to school. In some schools in the People's Republic of China, for example, you may find group recitation of lessons and little in the way of individual discussion, although points of the lesson may be discussed by the teacher. In other classrooms, in the PRC, observers from the United States have seen much animated and spontaneous discussion of lessons by the students, as teachers bring up questions and points to spark further discussion. In working with some Chinese American students, then, you may find some students do not readily join in group discussions. Or you may find that parents are concerned that American lessons are too easy because memorization to demonstrate complete mastery is not required.

Differences in Learning Materials Used in the Classroom

The types of learning materials used also vary from country to country and classroom to classroom. Some students, for example, may have used learning materials that required much in the way of "individual close work." That is, the use of books and other written materials at the student's desk. Until recently, for example, visual screenings for children were not widely available in the PRC. Many children with poor eyesight did not have corrective lenses, making "distance work" with the blackboard difficult. Chinese American children, who originally came from more rural Asian areas, may not have had as much experience with audio-visual learning materials such as closed circuit TVs, films, overhead projectors, and audio-cassettes.

Differences in the Ways Students Interact with Teachers

In Asian countries, teachers are generally given more authority and "respect" than their American counterparts. Student and teacher interactions tend to be more formal in this regard. For example, students in Asia may address teachers more formally by standing when called upon to answer. Or students may bow when greeting a teacher, even in passing. Teachers are not usually seen as "friends" in the more relaxed sense, although students may bring teachers gifts from home as tokens of respect.

Within some Asian classrooms, students will seldom initiate questions and they are not encouraged to do so. In fact, students who do ask questions may receive a reprimand for not paying attention or for slowing the class down. Because the Asian classroom may be structured for a more didactic teaching style, student questions such as asking for clarification may be viewed unfavorably. In contrast, in many American classrooms, teachers giving instructions will routinely ask the class if they have any questions.

Keep in mind that these points are generalizations. Some American observers in the PRC, for example, have seen much lively student and teacher interactions in which students ask frequent questions.

Expectations of Chinese American Parents and Peer Pressure

We have already discussed how Chinese American parents may view professionals and the overall school system. Yet, there is another area to be considered in working with Chinese American children, and that is expectations of parents. When the Chinese American child sees that these expectations differ from those of the teacher — and especially from parental expectations placed on their peers — conflicts can arise. The child may be caught between trying to follow the role models of both peers and teachers and, at the same time,adhering to parental expectations.

Parental Expectations

[GROUP DISCUSSION]: How might expectations of the Chinese American parent differ from those of American parents?

[TRAINER NOTE]: Use the following examples as lead-ins to discuss how expectations may create adjustment difficulties for Chinese American students.

Studying Chinese American parents may feel that the path to learning and achievement demands much hard work. It is essentially a "no pain, no gain" philosophy; from suffering come great things. The child may be doing well in school; yet, if the child does not appear to have to struggle with the material, then parents may feel the child is "goofing off". While American teachers may find such an emphasis on achievement admirable, they must also consider the conflicts it places on the Chinese American student who is trying to pace himself or herself to peer expectations. You can imagine the disfavor that peers would heap upon a student who willingly took on more work.

Academic Chinese American parents may feel that if their child is not doing well in certain areas, it is because the child is not working hard enough. Parents may also blame teachers for being too lenient in assigning deficits, parents may require their children to do extra homework, especially in areas mentioned by the teacher or assessors as "weaknesses." These parents may not agree with the educator's approach to letting the child "learn at his or her own developmental pace." Conversely, parents may feel that if a child has developmental or learning problems,

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expectations should be raised so the child will make a greater push to meet them and catch up.

Discipline Strict discipline may be favored by Chinese American parents. Thus, parents may feel American teachers are too lenient, especially if emphasis is placed on "independent skills," "an enjoyable learning environment," and having children "accept responsibility for their own behavior." If a child has learning problems, for example, parents may feel it is related to the easy-going attitude of the teacher. As assessors, you may find parents querying whether it is lack of discipline that led to the child's learning difficulties.

Many educators feel that Chinese American parents have expectations that are to be commended. These parents may be very involved in their child's program, ensure that homework is completed, and expect their children to be highly respectful of teachers. Yet, if Chinese American children perceive these expectations are different from those placed on their peers, they may experience internal conflicts that relate to both family and peer relationships.

Let's now consider how some of these conflicts might be manifested in peer relationships.

Peer Relationships

Chinese American parents may have concerns about peer influences in several areas:

- Maintenance of the Chinese language
- Respect for the family
- Respect for Chinese culture
- Diet
- Leisure activities
- Learning.

These parents may recognize the importance of their children developing American friendships as a means of more quickly assimilating American culture. However, parents may only want assimilation to go so far. More traditional families may be concerned that their children will become so "Americanized" that they will lose their own culture and language. From watching TV, parents may perceive that American children have bad habits, e.g. American children talk back to parents and teachers, play too much and study too little. They may feel that American children do not respect their parents' wishes.

At the same time, recent immigrant children may be trying to develop new friendships with American peers. To achieve a sense of belonging, they may try to "copy" peer behavior, including manner of dress, play activities, and language. Through exposure, Chinese American children may also see what behaviors are expected of peers. When these behaviors diverge from the Chinese American parents' expectations, bicultural conflicts may arise for the child and these conflicts may produce mental health problems.

[GROUP DISCUSSION]: Let's look at some specific bicultural conflicts. I will present the traditional Chinese American perspective. You provide the American perspective.

[TRAINER NOTE]: Hand out sheet "A Comparison of Parent Expectations: Traditional vs. Westernized." Lead the group to making the points given in the right hand column.

A Comparison of Parental Expectations

TRADITIONAL CHINESE AMERICAN VIEW	AMERICAN WESTERN VIEW
Children are extensions of parents.	Children are individuals.
The family makes decisions for the child.	The child is given many choices.
Older children are responsible for their siblings' actions.	Each child is responsible for his or her own actions.
Parents ask, "What can you do to help me?"	Parents ask, "What can I do to help you?"
Children should remain dependent on the family for most needs.	Early independence is encouraged.
Children should submit to structure.	Children should think what is right for themselves.
Children should respond to and be sensitive to the environment.	The environment is sensitive and should respond to the child.
Young children do not have well-formed feelings or individual needs.	Young children have well-formed feelings and personalities.
Praise is not given for a job well done.	Praise and rewards are given for a job well done.
Children should not express anger, frustration or contempt.	It is better to vent anger and frustration than let it sit inside.
Punishment for discipline problems include shaming, withdrawing of love.	Punishment for discipline problem should have logical consequences, e.g. removing toys and cleaning up messes.
Questioning adults or asking why is not accepted.	Curiosity and idividuation is encouraged.
Parents provide authority.	Parents provide guidance, support and explanations.

In comparing the two value systems, we should not judge one as wrong and the other right. Rather, each works within their own cultural value systems. The Chinese American child may be caught in the middle. He or she in effect must accommodate two value systems: one at home and one with peers.

Strategies to Help Chinese American Families Adjust to the American School System

Helping Parents Become Acquainted With the Role of Professionals

[GROUP DISCUSSION]: In initiating meetings, what can professionals do to ensure a harmonious relationship?

[TRAINER NOTE]: The following are suggested points to consider:

- Clearly define your role and describe your authority and responsibilities.
- Let parents know that you routinely meet with all families.
- Explain that you enjoy the opportunity to meet with all families to get to know them.
- Acknowledge the importance of both the school and home working closely together.
- If parents believe the psychologist handles only behavioral and emotional problems, explain your role. Assure parents that the meeting does not concern discipline problems.

Being Responsive to Parents' Expectations of Professionals

We have discussed what Chinese American parents might expect of professionals:

- That professionals are authority figures.
- That professionals should make all the decisions.
- That professions are thoroughly knowledgeable and have answers and simple solutions to problems.

[GROUP DISCUSSION]: If the purpose of your meeting with Chinese American parents is to include their input, and to present alternatives prior to decision-making, what can be done to make parents feel more comfortable with this approach?

[TRAINER NOTE]: Lead the group to discussing points, such as the following:

1) Thoroughly explain why you are offering alternatives and why parent input is important.

2) Demonstrate in other ways that you can make competent professional decisions and judgments.

3) If Chinese American parents bring up folk medicine or other cultural beliefs, do not summarily dismiss these beliefs. Show interest and listen actively, even if you do not agree with their beliefs.

4) When presenting choices to parents, be aware of external cues you might be unintentionally giving out that signal to the parents that you prefer one alternative over another.

Helping Parents Understand What Services are Available

[GROUP DISCUSSION]: What approaches can we use to let parents know about available services?

[TRAINERS NOTE]: Present topic areas for a "brainstorming session." Trainers can list the topic areas on an easel, blackboard, or overhead projector display, and then add group suggestions. To help you lead the discussion, we have provided points that should be included.

Written Information What type of written information would help us communicate more effectively with parents? If you have bilingual resources available, it would be ideal to develop a basic handout that covers areas that may be difficult for recent immigrant parents to understand. The handouts might include general information and should also address specific concerns Chinese American parents have in a "Question and Answer" format. Your handout might address questions such as: What types of children need special education? Do parents need to pay for this special education? Some topics you might address are: parents meetings, parent participation, IEP's?, school transportation, Who to call when parents have questions about their child, community resources; and assessment.

Parent Meetings

You might want to call together an individual or small group parent meeting that addresses some common concerns and questions. If some parents do not speak English, you should arrange to have an interpreter available. If you do have a group of parents, be sure you know which languages or dialects they speak. You may be able to find a dialect that all of the parents understand.

Parent Hotline

If you have bilingual resources available, you might arrange for a "hotline" number for non-English speaking parents to call when they have a question or concern. It may be that the person answering the phone needs to refer the question to other personnel such as the psychologist or resource specialist , but having the hotline opens the lines of communication and encourages parents to stay informed.

Parent Notes

You might want to send home brief notes on what the child did at school and, at the same time, encourage the parents to reciprocate with information. The idea is to encourage the same type of exchange of information that you work toward with all parents. Notes might be translated if parents are non-English speaking. Or if you know that the parent understands some written English, your notes could be phrased in clear, simple language. Often times, parents who have some English proficiency find it easier to deal with written notes, because they can look up unfamiliar words in the dictionary or ask a friend or relative for assistance with translation. Written notes however, should not be a sole substitute for personal interaction.

The above are just some of the basic ways through which you can establish and maintain parent communication with limited English-speaking Chinese American parents. You may be able to find your own approaches that are equally effective.

Helping Chinese American Students Become Acquainted With the American Classroom

Let's suppose that your Chinese American students by and large do not ask questions — and you discover later that they should have, because they did not understand an assignment, for example. If this is the case, you may want to encourage questions from students when meeting with them on an individual basis and offer them encouragement to ask questions in the classroom as well.

Chinese American students will likely look to peer models in learning how to interact with teachers. But, initially, teachers and assessors alike may find Chinese American students "hanging back." These students may find it difficult to discuss academic areas in which they are having problems. However, as some educators have found, once you have established an "open door" policy with these students, they may very well come to you frequently for advice. One educator effectively created an open atmosphere by taking a genuine interest in learning Chinese. She frequently asked her Chinese-speaking students how to say certain words in Chinese. These students, in turn, felt comfortable asking her questions about their studies and other areas which helped them adjust more quickly to their new American school.

Helping Parents and Children Cope With Bicultural Conflicts

What can assessors and educators do to help children with bicultural conflicts? First, it is important to recognize whether children are experiencing bicultural conflicts. We may confuse a child's withdrawn behavior as that "typical" of the quiet, shy Chinese child.

Secondly, if both the child and parents are experiencing bicultural conflicts, you may want to discuss why adjustment problems are common with most immigrant families. By discussing where differences lie, you may be able to come up with both a better understanding of the problem and some approach for resolving it satisfactorily for both the parent and child.

Interviewing Chinese American Parents as Part of the Assessment Process

OBJECTIVE 4:	Participants will understand how to include Chinese American parents as part of the assessment team.
OUTCOME 4.1	Participants will know the three (3) major reasons why Chinese American parents may find it difficult to participate in the assessment interview.
OUTCOME 4.2	Participants will identify three (3) considerations in preparing for an interview.
OUTCOME 4.3	Participants will identify three (3) criteria for selecting an interpreter/translator for parent interviews.

Areas that Need to be Probed Through Parent Interviews

Why are parent interviews important to assessment?

In assessing any child with suspected problems, we need to include many sources of information: teacher reports, assessment instruments, observation, and parent interview. As part of the whole process, parent interviews can provide us with a clearer perspective as to how a child is functioning. Assessment instruments may probe typical behaviors that serve as clues to the child's strengths and weaknesses. Information obtained through parent interviews may enable us to better interpret information we get through assessment. Each part of the assessment process is essential.

Parent interviews are especially important when assessing a recent immigrant child. Our instruments may not reveal whether absence of certain skills is related to cultural differences or a handicapping condition. Is, for example, the child's inability to sort objects by categories related to his or her inexperience with those objects — or to more global learning problems? We might find that a child is unable to sort knives, spoons and forks as eating utensils, only to discover she is able to sort comparable eating utensils more typical of his or her culture. By the same token, we may discover that, indeed, the child generally lacks skills in categorizing objects, even those common in his or her culture. This is just one example of the type of information assessors can gain through parent interviews.

Let's now look at four general areas of information that can be probed through parent interviews.

Interviewing Parents on Adaptive Behavior Domains

When we assess adaptive behavior, we are essentially looking at the child's ability to adapt to or cope with life in a functional manner. We look at the child's different abilities, skills, and behaviors that enable the child to function in different environments — at home, at school, and with peers, to name just a few.

Determining whether problems are global or environmental.

Through interview, we can determine whether classroom behaviors or those observed during assessment correspond with behaviors outside of those settings. If certain expected behaviors are absent in all settings (home and school), then we need to start remediation of a more global problem in the adaptive learning area. If the child experiences problems only at school, for example, and not at home, that is a clue that the child may need intervention which aims at transitional problems. The child may be undergoing school adjustment problems. Of course, parent interview in the child's adaptive behavior may not only reveal weaknesses, but also strengths. As with any child, strengths need to be identified and included in the child's program plan.

Examples of how assessment instruments may reveal different findings from the parent interview.

Generally, we use criterion-referenced instruments, such as the Vineland Scale of Social Maturity, to assess adaptive areas. While these instruments are useful in giving us a baseline of behavior, we need to supplement these with parent interviews, particularly on aspects of behavior that may hinge on American cultural experiences not available to the child.

As assessors, you know that behaviors only provide surface information or clues about the wide range of skills and experiences that are necessary for a child to perform that behavior. In assessing the Chinese American child, specific behaviors may be difficult to elicit in order to understand what underlying skills and experiences may be present. It may be that we can obtain more information about the relationship between the child's overt behavior and internal competencies by looking at behaviors more typical of that child's culture. In other words, when we assess any behavior, we need to consider what skills, experiences, and assumptions are inherent in performing that behavior. This is the key to examining the relevance of your findings using assessment instruments.

Let's consider an example right now.

[GROUP DISCUSSION]: What assumptions about the child's environment and experiences underlie the child's ability to perform the following?

[TRAINER NOTE]: Lead the group to making the observations given in the right hand column.

BEHAVIOR	ASSUMPTIONS
Can recite home telephone	Assumes child has had experience with telephone, e.g. knows what it is, how telephone numbers relate to calling home. Also assumes parents felt this type of independent skill was important and that child was trained to remember his telephone number. Assumes child may be away from home and may need to know his own address

[TRAINER NOTE]: These are just a few of the experiential and environmental assumptions we can make. With even these few assumptions in mind, we can see how the lack of a telephone may be one reason why a recent immigrant child from a rural area might not be able to recite a telephone number. We need to also be aware of the degree of importance that individual parents place on independent skills.

Child uses knife and fork	Assumes the child has had experience with a knife and fork in eating situations. Assumes self-help feeding skills have been taught.

[TRAINER NOTE]: We may find that self-help skills have been taught, but perhaps using Chinese utensils, such as chopsticks, in place of silverware. So, it is important to look for parallel competencies in assessing skills that depend on familiarity with objects and experiences.

Interviewing Parents on the Child's Medical History

In gathering more information about general health conditions, you will want to ask parents about past health screenings and medical treatment. This is especially important if medical information is not available in a written form, or if it is not written in English. By interviewing parents, you may also discover areas that have not been medically evaluated, and it may be necessary to do so before planning and intervention.

In some Asian countries, vision and hearing screenings are not routinely performed. In the People's Republic of China, for example, glasses are not usually dispensed by individual prescription. Instead, those who need glasses choose from ready-made ones, trying to find the pair that offers the best correction. Thus, if a child wears glasses, you may want to inquire what type of vision screening was performed to obtain the correction. You would certainly want to inquire about vision and hearing screenings, since poor vision or hearing can contribute to learning problems — ones that may be remediable when the underlying source of the problem is resolved.

As assessors, we're used to automatically getting medical evaluations and reports from hospitals and pediatricians. Family medical histories and neo-natal health records are often available to us. They contain most of the pertinent information we need in order to gain an understanding of medical conditions that may relate to the child's problems. What if this information is not readily available? What if you need to rely upon parents to obtain this information? What questions would you ask?

[GROUP DISCUSSION]: Let's list those basic medical information areas that you would obtain from parents.

[TRAINER NOTE]: Lead the group to listing the following:

- **Family medical history**
- **Pre-natal history**
- **Post-natal history**
- **Hearing screenings**
- **Vision screenings**
- **History of prolonged illness**
- **History of high fever**
- **Dietary history and present diet**
- **Current medical resources**
- **Significant accidents or falls requiring extensive medical care.**

In discussing these areas with parents, you may want to preface your interview questions with an explanation of why these questions are necessary. It is a good idea to mention that these are areas of information you obtain from all parents. You need to be sensitive to parents' fears that they have done something wrong which makes your questioning necessary. You need to also be aware of some parents' concerns — particularly those of recent immigrants — that interview questions may reveal information that will jeopardize their residency status.

Interviewing Parents About the Child's Prior Educational Experiences

As with medical histories, school records of the recent immigrant child may not be readily available. Such information, however, is critical, especially to help you assess behaviors you may observe in both the classroom and during the formal assessment period. Information about past educational experiences will also help you plan needed transitional activities that can help the child adjust more readily to his or her new learning environment. Let's suppose that records are not available to you. What information would you need to obtain from parents?

[GROUP DISCUSSION]: Let's list information areas that would be most helpful to us in assisting the child and planning future program needs.

[TRAINER NOTE]: Lead the group to listing areas such as those given below. If the group has difficulty coming up with examples, ask questions such as "What about teacher input? What teacher information would you need?"

Grading system
[TRAINER NOTE]: Grading systems may differ in other countries. Grades may be numerically as opposed to alphabetically assigned. Students may also be numerically ranked. If you do have access to grades, you may need some interpretation of what they mean.

Teacher report of the student
- Narrative comments regarding behavior, achievement, etc.
- Written reports regarding behavior, achievement, etc.
- Summaries of meeting with parents

Involvement in special programs
- Special education placement
- Therapy programs
- Day care or childcare programs
- Grades repeated (which grades)

Curriculum emphasis
- Academic areas covered
- Physical education activities

[TRAINER NOTE]: Some countries, such as North Vietnam, may have a different curricular emphasis from that in the United States. For example, some Vietnamese schools have a heavier emphasis on political teachings and physical conditioning, rather than basic academics, such as reading, writing, and math.

Interviewing Parents About the Home Environment and Parent Expectations

In interviewing parents about the home environment, you may want to apply an extra measure of *sensitivity* and awareness regarding questions that may provoke fear or defensiveness. As we've already discussed in other areas of our section on "Culture," parents may not always understand your intentions for asking questions about the family. You need to stress that information you obtain is highly confidential and explain safeguards for keeping the information confidential.

Information concerning the home environment and parent expectations will be particularly helpful to you in planning transitional intervention. It will also provide greater awareness of possible *bicultural conflicts* or *environmental pressures* present for both the child and family and how these factors may contribute to learning or adjustment problems. Information about the home environment will also help you plan more appropriate intervention strategies. You might recommend to a parent, for example, that their child spend an hour engaged in self-directed play activities, only to discover later that living conditions are so crowded, that no family member has time alone in the household.

Questions that you ask may be quite similar to those you ask any parent. However, there are specific cultural considerations you should be attuned to.

Let's now discuss what some of those information areas should be, and what cultural considerations we should keep in mind in interviewing parents.

[GROUP DISCUSSION]: Let's list some areas of information that will give you a better understanding of the child's home environment that may affect intervention strategies.

[TRAINER NOTE]: Lead the group to list areas such as those given in the ***left hand column.*** *Supplement this with comments given* ***in the right hand*** *column.*

Siblings and their roles

As we've already mentioned, more traditional Chinese American families may have specific roles and responsibilities given to each child. You would want to know not only the birth order of each child, but also some of the responsibilities of each child are in relation to the child you are assessing. An older sister may be the chief caretaker of younger children. Boys may be seen as more important and, thus, more attention may be devoted to them and more sacrifices may be made for them.

Extended family

Recent immigrant families may be living with relatives. You may find the child is in a home environment with a large extended family. If grandparents are in the home — or in close contact with the family — you may want to determine what authority the grandparents have in making decisions for the family and the child.

Living milieu

What are the living conditions in the home? You may be dealing with a family with good financial support. Or you may find, especially with recent refugees, that financial and living conditions are quite difficult. Does the child have a private bedroom? Or does the child share a room with many other adults and children? Is there adequate room for play? Or does the child spend most of the play time indoors in cramped living quarters? Is there an area in the home where the child is able to study? Are the family's economic difficulties such that their energies are devoted more to survival, making your suggestions to spend more time with the child impractical?

Language used in the home

You will want to determine not only what language is used in the home with each family member, but the relative importance the family places on maintaining Chinese and in developing English skills. In some families, for example, you may find that parents speak to the children in Chinese, while children respond back in English. Or you may find Chinese is spoken between the parents and their children, but English is spoken between peers and siblings. Some parents may be eager to have their children learn English to improve their chances of success in the future. Other parents may fear their child will become too Americanized and lose the ability to communicate closely with family members.

Learning materials

What toys and other educational materials are available in the house? Are books and magazines available? Are they in Chinese, English or both? How often is the TV used as a passive source of stimulation? What are the child's favorite TV programs? What emphasis does the family put on learning and homework?

Parent employment

Key in this area is finding out how much time parents have available to spend with the family. Parents may have jobs that make it difficult for them to attend parent meetings — even in the evening. Taking time off in the middle of the day to meet with teachers may impose a financial hardship. You may find parents have little leisure time to spend with their children. The type of employment the parent has may also give you a clue to the importance the family places on the child's education. As we have already mentioned, many immigrant families are eager to take advantage of greater educational opportunities for their children — opportunities they themselves may have missed.

Parents' educational background

The parents' current employment may not reflect their educational background. Some parents, for example, who were employed as physicians in their native country, may be working as hospital orderlies in the United States. Or you may find that educational opportunities for parents were limited, making it difficult for them to assist their children with homework assignments. Some recent immigrant parents may be currently attending English language courses.

Parent expectations

Upon interviewing parents in the above areas, you may have already gathered some idea of parental expectations. Many Chinese American parents have great hopes that their child will be able to succeed with the new opportunities afforded them. You may find that a major reason the family immigrated was to provide better opportunities for their children. There may be heavy parental expectations that their children — including the handicapped child — will be able to attend college, which is an opportunity not widely available in some Asian countries. You may also find that parents expect their children to maintain equal fluency and skills in Chinese and maintain their Chinese cultural values. Children may be enrolled in Chinese language schools in the evenings or weekends.

Consequently, it may be important to clarify the parents' expectations of the school and teachers in the United States.

Social support

You may find the family has extensive social support provided by family members who have lived in the United States for many years. Or you may find the family is literally isolated; they may be separated from key family members and friends. Many family members may develop strong social support with church members and other organizations. You may also find that families with a handicapped child avoid social gatherings that will call attention to their perceived stigma.

Preparing for and Conducting the Parent Interview

In preparing for the parent interview, you need to look at three major concerns:

- **Who will be present at the interview.**
- **How will the interview be structured with respect to time, location, and communication protocol.**
- **How the will interview actually be conducted, particularly if an interpreter/translator is involved**

Let's look at each of these concerns in more detail:

Participants at the Parent Interview

Who is invited to the interview?

If the purpose of the interview is both to secure information and obtain parent decisions on school matters, you need to consider not only who will be *present* at the interview, but also who will *not be present*. In some traditional Chinese families with extended family members, such as grandparents, those senior members have great decision-making influences. You may meet with a child's mother and come to an agreement about a special education placement, only to find later that the paternal grandmother objects strongly to the placement on the misperception that exposure to other handicapped children is bad for the child. In the traditional family, the mother must acquiesce to the grandmother's wishes or risk major family conflicts.

Thus, in arranging for a family interview, it is important to *state the purpose of the meeting*. You should invite both parents and invite them to ask other adults who are involved in making decisions for the child.

Similarly, if the purpose of the meeting is to gather information about the child's home environment and behaviors, you may want to invite the *primary caretaker* to attend, *if* that also meets with the approval of the parents. The primary caretaker may be an older family member. Use discretion, however, in inviting siblings or other family members to meetings, even if they are the primary caretakers. Parents may feel more inhibited about discussing the child's problems when others are present, and the presence of others may also violate the confidentiality of information being gathered.

Individual parent roles in the interview process

In one recent study of newly immigrated parents conducted in San Francisco, it was found that mothers generally took on the greater portion of responsibilities in bringing up the children. While both parents from recent immigrant families tend to be involved to some degree in raising the children, the mother may be more knowledgeable about the child's specific behaviors and needs. Many of the fathers expressed a desire to be more involved in their children's upbringing, although job obligations prevented them from doing so. Usually, even when fathers are not heavily involved in raising the children, they are apprised regularly of what is happening in the family. In many traditional families, the father has an important say in family decisions. He is also the one that generally metes out disciplinary measures.

With this in mind, you can see that having both parents attend the meeting is ideal. The mother may be more knowledgeable about the child's behaviors, while the father needs to be present for the decision-making process.

Structuring the Interview

In preparing for the interview, you need to consider the following parameters for structuring the interview:

- **Time of the meeting**
- **Location**
- **Choice of interviewer**
- **Dress of interviewer**
- **Others invited to the interview**

Let's consider each of these areas separately.

Time of the meeting

To gather information about the Chinese American LEP child may require more time than you usually spend with other parents. As we have already outlined, there are many information areas that may need to be covered more thoroughly, especially if there are written information gaps.

If you find that you need a longer period of time in order to conduct the interview, it may be wise to hold two or more separate meetings. This may be especially helpful if either parent finds it difficult to take long periods of time off work. If the mother is able to attend, but the father has difficulty getting off work, you may want to secure most of the information from the mother and hold a later meeting to discuss solutions and decisions with both parents present.

You may also want to schedule more time for an interview with Chinese American parents who speak little English. If an interpreter/translator is used, more time is generally needed to transmit information.

Location

Ideally, you should offer the option of meeting at either the parents' home or at school. Parents may feel more comfortable in their own home, and this situation would also afford you the opportunity to observe the home environment without having to ask questions. You may be able to determine, for example, what living conditions are like, toys that are available, and so forth. Keep in mind that some recent refugees may also lack transportation and may also have younger children in the home whom parents cannot leave unattended. As in any situation, you should never make a generalization that all parents want to meet in their home. Some parents may actually prefer to meet in the school environment where there is more privacy.

Choice of interviewer

The interviewer should be someone who best knows what information needs to be gathered but who also can develop a quick rapport with the parent. Your choice of interviewer should also consider the nature of the information that will be asked. A Chinese American woman may feel uncomfortable discussing medical histories and pregnancy problems with a male interviewer. A Chinese American father may feel uncomfortable talking about personal family matters with a female interviewer. There are no blanket generalizations, however. You need to be attuned to particular needs of each family and what the purpose of the meeting is.

Dress of the interviewer

More traditional families may expect school professionals to be formally dressed, e.g. men wearing suits and ties, women wearing dresses instead of slacks. Appearances may be superficial in some ways, but they may also put the parents more at ease in discussing important family matters with someone who looks "professional."

Others invited to the interview

If parents are limited in English proficiency, you will have to arrange for an interpreter. Since the selection of an interpreter is a more complex issue, we will discuss it in greater detail in another session.

Conducting the Interview

In conducting a successful interview with Chinese American parents, you will probably want to use many of the same communication techniques that you use with other parents. In working with parents with limited English proficiency, you will need to rely even more heavily on non-verbal techniques to establish *rapport*, *understanding* and *trust*.

If *rapport, understanding* and *trust* are not established, you may get little or incorrect information. Parents may not understand the nature of the interview. Your questions may be perceived as "tests" that they must pass to secure the best education for their child. So these parents may indicate that the child is capable of doing more than he or she is actually doing.

Obviously, explaining the nature of the interview and communicating rapport is more difficult when you are using an interpreter. There is truth behind the saying "Something gets lost in the translation." But there are some ways you can make communication — even translated ones — more effective.

Let's look at some common techniques for effective communications. These are techniques you can use effectively with any parent; and indeed, with anyone whom you communicate. In this instance, we will apply our examples to an interview with Chinese American parents.

Getting acquainted with social graces

Every culture has its own set of "social graces." In many Chinese traditional families, it is a custom to offer guests — even those on official business — tea and some light snacks. Accepting these small pleasantries is a good way to establish rapport.

It is always difficult to judge how any parent wishes to be addressed. You may be dealing with parents who are used to more formal manners of communication in which only friends are addressed by first names. On the other hand, you may find parents who wholeheartedly embrace their new American ways. These parents may ask you to address them on a first-name basis. To be on the diplomatic side, however, you should always begin addressing Chinese American parents as Mr. and Mrs. A warm, friendly, but *professional,* demeanor is perhaps the best approach, until other clues let you know otherwise.

If both parents are present at the interview, you will need to address them both, even if one parent seems more knowledgeable about the child's behavior. While we often interview two people at different times to "cross-check" our information, be careful not to place either parents or other family members in the position of overtly contradicting one another. For example, if the grandmother has told you that the child can sing many songs in Chinese, but the mother has told you otherwise, do not point out inconsistencies. You need to also be aware that one parent or family member will probably be reluctant to contradict the other during the interview.

Finally, with more traditional families, you should avoid the "low-key" approach. That is, do not denigrate your credentials, observations, or make remarks such as "Ph.D's do not mean a thing — you probably know more than I do about your child," "I am probably not seeing everything about Chang that I should," "Excuse me if this sounds like a dumb question." Display your confidence with ease and professionalism.

Reading between the lines

In getting acquainted with people, we often subconsciously listen to subtle speech cues such as rate of voice, length of response and tone of voice. These cues enable us to "read between the lines," so to speak. Chinese American parents may be agreeing to what we are saying, but the shortness of their response and the tone of their voice may belie that. Yet, you would not want to confront a parent by saying, "I can tell you do not really agree with me." Instead, you might want to expand your explanation when you sense confusion or disagreement. In speaking to parents with limited English proficiency, be careful how quickly and slowly you speak. Rapid-fire questions requiring speech may be insulting.

Speaking and understanding body language

Traditional families may find it more comfortable to maintain a greater distance between themselves and the interviewer, especially if the interview is being conducted between the mother and a male interviewer. Eye contact among more traditional families may be brief. Brief eye contact does not convey shyness, but respect for the professional. The interviewer should not maintain constant eye contact, since this might increase anxiety with Chinese American parents, as it would with any parent. Traditional Chinese people tend not be as physically expressive as more Westernized people. Generally, Chinese American women from traditional backgrounds do not shake hands with strangers or acquaintances. Friendly touching among adults, such as back-patting, is not common to traditional Chinese culture, and thus, should not be done. A good rule of thumb when it comes to body language is to use the parents' amount of expression as a monitor for your own. Be more reserved with parents who seem reserved, more expressive with parents who seem more open.

Getting a handle on verbal techniques

There are many verbal techniques you can use to help establish and maintain rapport. Here are a few of them:

Limiting. This involves defining the purpose of the meeting, so that fewer misunderstandings about the intent and scope of the interview occur. Some parents may think that a single "professional" can answer many "official" questions. You may have to limit the interview by saying, "This interview is to find out what you feel Chang needs most at school; however, the school does not have any information on obtaining citizenship."

Approving and reassuring. You encourage parents to talk more by showing acceptance of what a parent has just said. For example, if parents say their child is "too noisy," you might express assurance by saying, "Most children that age tend to be very active around the house."

Interpreting and clarifying. Clarifying ensures that you understand and that you are understood. By interpreting, we do not mean "translating," but rather paraphrasing in your own words and perhaps expanding on the meaning of what has just been expressed. For example, you might solidify what has been said, or come to a mutual agreement in a comment such as, "You said Chang can read when he feels like it — *and maybe it is harder for him to read when the TV set is on. Is that right?"* As we mentioned before, however, be cautious not to "put words in the parent's mouth" by clarifying or using words that parents might perceive as the "right answers."

Post Interview Procedures

After the interview information has been received, organized and disseminated, you will then be keeping parents informed of further assessment needs and decisions regarding their child's educational program. It is especially important to keep those channels of communication open with Chinese American parents. They may be concerned about their child's progress and if time elapses between meetings and further communication, they may presume the school has lost interest. Immediate follow-up, at least with some indication as to when parents can expect to receive further information, can go far to increase rapport and credibility of the professional. You will find that attention to these details can also smooth the way for future communications.

Selecting an Interpreter

When Should an Interpreter Be Used?

Obviously, if the parents you will be interviewing do not speak any English and you do not speak any Chinese, you will need an interpreter. On the other hand, you may also be working with parents who speak or understand some English. You should not assume that a parent who speaks some English will be able to fully participate in an interview situation requiring facility in both understanding and speaking English. In those cases, you might want to use the following steps in determining whether an interpreter is needed:

Explain the nature of interview fully

In setting up a meeting with parents, the purpose of the interview should be explained. With non-English speaking parents, this might be done by a note written in Chinese. Your communication should also explain that you will be giving out confidential information and asking questions, and that parents will be doing the same. "I'm interested in learning more about what Chang does at home after school." "I will be discussing how Chang has been performing in the classroom."

Explain the availability of interpreters

With non-English speaking parents, you should indicate that an interpreter, provided by the school district, will be at the meeting. If parents speak some English, and it is not clear whether an interpreter is necessary, you can offer the services of an interpreter. Your note, for example, might ask: "Would you like an interpreter present at your meeting?" followed by "If so, what language and dialect?"

Who Should Provide the Interpreter?

It is solely the school district's responsibility to provide the interpreter. This ensures confidentiality of information being presented. Understandably, this may be difficult if the school district does not have personnel who are Chinese speaking. In that case, your school district will need to make arrangements to secure interpreters as consultants to the school district. Parents should not be given the responsibility of finding their own interpreters for at least three major reasons:

Information presented at interviews is highly confidential

Parents may not fully realize what will be presented. Thus, if a relative, friend or acquaintance is present at the meeting, parents may experience discomfort, shame, or embarrassment in having private family matters revealed to others.

Interpreters secured by parents may not be familiar with the nature of the interview

In translating information, they may gloss over details, "soften" information that they feel may be difficult for parents to accept, or add their own interpretation of what is being conveyed.

Older siblings should be excluded for clinical reasons

Some recent immigrant parents may rely on older children to provide translating. Even when older siblings appear "mature," you should avoid this situation. It places a considerable amount of pressure upon the older sibling charged with this responsibility. Once parents involve their older children in school matters, they may continue to involve them in future proceedings. These children may then feel resentful that this responsibility has been placed upon them, ashamed to be talking about private family matters, guilty if they perceive that their sibling's handicapping condition is partially their fault, or even anxious if the meeting is not successful or if their sibling's future progress seems to depend on them.

Criteria for Selecting Interpreters

Ideally, your school district should arrange for a pool of interpreters, either using personnel with bilingual skills or hiring outside interpreters. In either case, your interpreters should have qualifications other than bilingual skills. In designing your pool of interpreters, you might consider the following:

Languages and Dialects Spoken

As we've already pointed out, there are many Chinese dialects. Your pool then might include interpreters who are familiar with many of the common dialects: Cantonese, Mandarin, and Toishanese, for example. The "most common" dialects might vary depending on where your school district is located. In San Francisco, for example, various Cantonese dialects are more commonly heard as opposed to Mandarin. To more accurately determine which interpreters are needed, you might informally poll your Chinese American parents who have limited English proficiency.

Ability to maintain confidentiality of information

Your interpreters should be persons who understand the need for confidentiality. Ideally, interpreters are personnel from your school district who are familiar with and obligated to follow the school district's confidentiality procedures and policies. In using outside interpreters, you need to provide training and stipulations in the contract to ensure that confidentiality of information is maintained.

Familiarity with nature and purpose of meeting

Your interpreters need to be briefed on topics that will be discussed. You might also provide a list of terms that will be used, and determine how familiar the interpreter is with these words and expressions. For example, an inexperienced interpreter may inappropriately translate technical terms, such as "mentally retarded" as "crazy."

Professionalism

Since your interpreter will be "doing the talking for you," you want to make sure he or she will carry off the proper tone and professionalism of the meeting. Appropriate dress, manner of addressing parents, and sensitivity in discussing issues are also qualities you should look for in interpreters.

Understanding of what "translating" means

Translating does not simply mean a literal "word for word" translation of what is being said. Some words in English do not have an equivalent in Chinese. The interpreter needs to be aware of the intent you wish to communicate. At the same time, you need to inform the interpreter of the content that needs to be expressed. In setting guidelines, you should explain the danger of having interpreters "interpret" the content from their own perspective.

If your school district does not have Chinese-speaking psychologists and educators, it should provide *adequate training and an orientation* as to how interviews should be conducted. In essence, the components of that training should minimally cover the areas we have just talked about. Ideally, the training should include a bilingual educator who can provide a "dry run" of an interview and who can assess each interpreter's capabilities in translating sensitive and confidential information in both English and Chinese.

Preparing for an Interview Using an Interpreter

Let's suppose that you will be conducting a parent meeting in which the services of an interpreter are needed. What points should you keep in mind to make sure the meeting is a successful one?

Here are a few ways you can prepare for the interview:

Establish a protocol for translating.

Introduce yourself and the interpreter, the role you have in the interview, the role the interpreter has, and the role that parents have.

Address your remarks and questions directly to parents. Even though you are using an interpreter, you want to communicate with the parents, not the interpreter. When parents ask questions, look towards them and listen. Remember, much is communicated non-verbally.

Limit your remarks and questions to a few sentences between translations. This reduces the likelihood that interpreters will paraphrase inaccurately or omit important information.

Brief interpreters on the purpose of the meeting.

Note sensitive areas that will be discussed.

Ask interpreters if they are familiar with terms you will be discussing, such as "classroom observation," "assessment," "psychologist," "handicapping conditions," "learning disabilities," and any other terms that will be used during the meeting.

Brief interpreters on any written documents that will be shown during the meeting, so they can easily explain what they are.

Provide interpreters with a written agenda of what will be covered.

Include terms that will be used.

Include important points that will be made.

Learn a few simple Chinese phrases.

Prior to the meeting, ask the interpreter to teach you a few common social phrases such as "Pleased to meet you," "Until we meet again," and "Thanks for coming." Your attempt to use the parents' language — even if your pronunciation is imperfect — will go a long way toward quickly establishing rapport.

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Module 2

Assessing Language Skills of Limited English Proficient Chinese American Students

(Language Module)

評估

Assessing Language Skills of Limited English Proficient Chinese American Children: Introduction for Trainers

This module will look at five major issues of language assessment of LEP Chinese American children. Those areas are:

- Problems in Assessing LEP Chinese American Children
- Assessing Functional English and Chinese Language Skills
- Recognizing Second Language Production Errors
- Clues to Language Disorders in LEP Chinese-Speaking Children
- Adapting Speech and Language Procedures and Instruments.

In addition to the regular sections of this module, there are three additional sections in the Appendix. These materials are geared to speech and language clinicians or those with a more extensive background in language assessment. The materials are:

- Chinese Language Characteristics
- Comparing English and Chinese Speech Sounds Systems
- Features of Second language Acquisitions.

These sections can be added to the workshop, if desired, or provided to participants as handouts.

Approach to this Training

This module assumes that participants have some background in speech and language assessment and experience with basic language assessment instruments. It does not assume that participants have any prior experience with LEP Chinese American children.

Since this is a knowledge level training, the focus of this training is on understanding key issues. We have also attempted to provide a framework for understanding when and where procedures, instruments, and observations may need to be modified to meet the assessment needs of LEP Chinese-speaking children.

We have provided this framework in five areas:

SECTION 1: Problems in Assessing LEP Chinese-Speaking Children

To orient the participants to this workshop, basic terms are first discussed. Emphasis then moves to discussing basic problems of language assessment, including the lack of appropriately scaled instruments. Through participation in a workshop activity, the group will also look at specific types of language disorders that are easily confused or overlooked as second language learning errors. Finally, we will summarize why it is difficult to adapt assessment instruments to Chinese-speaking children.

SECTION 2: Assessing Functional English and Chinese Language Skills

This section looks at the first step in understanding the child's two language systems: assessment of functional language skills. We will then review three parameters of language where we should focus our comparative analysis. Finally, we present three approaches to gathering information on the child's use of both English and Chinese.

SECTION 3: Recognizing Common Second Language Production Errors

We will begin by looking at the concept of "predictability" of second language learning errors. We will then look at four common types of speech production errors that are found in the Chinese-speaking child's use of English. Finally, we will consider some common grammatical errors that are typically produced by second language learners. The emphasis in this section is on understanding language errors that may *not* signify language disorders.

SECTION 4: Clues to Language Disorders

Emphasis in this section is on delineating common clues to language disorders. These clues are ones that assessors can apply to their assessment of the child's functional language skills in both languages. At the end of this section, participants will also be asked to contribute suggestions for other ways in which language disorders might be manifested.

SECTION 5: Adapting Speech Language Procedures and Instruments

This last section looks briefly at the problems of translating formal tests. Also considered is when the translating of language tasks is not appropriate. To enable participants to understand how tests may be adapted, participants are provided a checklist summarizing ways that instruments may or may not be adapted.

Issues of Assessing Language Skills of Limited English Proficient Chinese American Children

OBJECTIVE 1:	Participants will understand major issues and problems of assessing language skills in LEP Chinese American children.
OUTCOME 1.1	Participants will recognize seven areas in which appropriate bilingual assessment resources are lacking.
OUTCOME 1.2	Participants will know three types of communicative disorders which may be difficult to assess in a child with limited English proficiency.
OUTCOME 1.3	Participants will know three reasons why it is difficult to adapt English language assessment instruments for LEP Chinese-speaking children.
OBJECTIVE 2:	Participants will have a framework for assessing functional language skills in both English and Chinese.
OUTCOME 2.1	Participants will know why assessment of functional language skills in Chinese and English is important.
OUTCOME 2.2	Participants will know three parameters for comparing functional language skills, in English and Chinese.
OUTCOME 2.3	Participants will know three approaches to gathering information about the child's use of both languages.
OBJECTIVE 3:	Participants will have a framework for recognizing second language production errors.
OUTCOME 3.1	Participants will understand the concept of predictability of speech and language errors in second language learning.
OUTCOME 3.2	Participants will know four common forms of English speech production errors that might be found in the LEP Chinese-speaking child's speech.
OUTCOME 3.3	Participants will know five common English grammatical errors that may be evident in the Chinese-speaking child's language.

OBJECTIVE 4:	Participants will have a framework for recognizing clues that signal speech or language disorders in LEP Chinese-speaking children.
OUTCOME 4.1	Participants will know ten clues that may help differentiate speech and language disorders from limited English proficiency.
OBJECTIVE 5:	Participants will have a framework for modifying language instruments for assessment of LEP Chinese-speaking children
OUTCOME 5.1	Participants will know four types of language tasks that are not amenable to translation.
OUTCOME 5.2	Participants will have a checklist for reviewing how various language instruments may be modified for assessment of LEP Chinese American children.

Training Text

Issues of Assessing Language Skills of Limited English Proficient Chinese American Children

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OUTCOME 1.3	Participants will know three reasons why it is difficult to adapt English language assessment instruments for LEP Chinese-speaking children.

Introduction to Terms

Before we discuss some of the key issues of assessing language skills in LEP Chinese American Children, let's first look at some of the terms we will be using frequently in this workshop. These are not formal definitions, but simply working terms.

[TRAINER'S NOTE]: See Language Module, Handout 1.

Language

In this workshop, we will be discussing language in two ways: First to refer to a specific *language group*, such as Chinese, or English. Second, we will also be talking about the child's *language systems* as a means of communication, comprehension, and functional language use. We will be discussing problems of assessing the child's language system when two language groups are involved.

Limited English Proficient

In this workshop, when we refer to a Chinese American child as being limited English proficient (LEP), we will be referring to children whose native language is Chinese and who have comparatively fewer developed language skills in English. Limited English proficiency in and of itself will not refer to a language disorder.

Bilingual

In a later part of this workshop we will be discussing in greater depth what we mean by bilingualism. But as a working definition, bilingual will describe persons who have skills in two languages, although these may not be equal for both languages.

Language or Speech Disorders

We will use these terms to refer to problems in the child's language system. Language or communicative disorders do *not* refer to the child's limited English proficiency. Examples of speech and language disorders include delayed language, dyspraxia, stuttering, and deficits that are secondary to mental retardation, hearing loss, emotional disturbances, or other developmental problems.

The Current Lack of Bilingual Resources

A major reason we have difficulties in assessing LEP Chinese American is our current lack of bilingual resources. These resources affect our services to LEP children in three ways. First, it is often difficult to know when to refer an LEP or NEP Chinese American child for further language assessment. Secondly, we may find it difficult to appropriately and adequately assess the child. Finally, we may find it difficult to accurately diagnose the child's problem so that appropriate solutions can be sought.

[GROUP DISCUSSION]: What bilingual resources do we currently lack that make referral, assessment, and diagnosis problematic?

[TRAINER NOTE]: Lead the group to listing examples such as the following:

We lack:

- Assessors or resource personnel who are fluent in both English and Chinese
- Assessment instruments scaled for Chinese-speaking children
- Guidelines for referring LEP Chinese American children with suspected language disorders
- Information about normal Chinese language acquisition
- Information about normal errors in second language learning
- Information about characteristics of language learning problems in the Chinese American Child.
- Guidelines for adapting assessment instruments for Chinese children

While we cannot give you bilingual assessors or assessment instruments standardized for Chinese-speaking children, we will focus the remainder of this workshop on providing you with the other resources.

Types of Communicative Disorders that are Difficult to Assess

Why Referral is a Problem

As we have already discussed, a major problem in assessing the language system of LEP Chinese children is referral. The problem is of two dimensions:

- Over-referral of LEP children to speech therapy
- Under-referral of LEP children who have speech/language disorders

Over-Referral

As recently as five years ago, bilingual children often filled the speech and language clinician's roster in disproportionate numbers. Many school districts lacked ESL resources — such as bilingual classes — and consequently, bilingual children producing typical errors in learning English were often referred inappropriately for speech therapy.

Today, with increased awareness of the problems of assessing LEP children, and with increasing numbers of Chinese-speaking children entering the classrooms, we have become more alert to the dangers of inappropriate assessment and placement.

Under-Referral

Perhaps of greater concern is the number of LEP Chinese American children who are not being referred for assessment of suspected speech and language disorders. This may be particularly true for children with more subtle language disorders, — for example, a mild language deficit in receptive or expressive language areas. Our difficulties in understanding how the child's limited English proficiency interacts with language system problems may result in our missing the child's true problem. Oftentimes, unless the communicative disorder is secondary to already diagnosed handicapping conditions (such as mental retardation language), speech disorders may remain unrecognized. What is particularly disconcerting is that language deficits are often a primary diagnostic signal of more global problems, such as mild developmental delay.

Furthermore, early referral of any child with mild learning or language problems is much more difficult. We can certainly expect this difficulty to be compounded with the LEP Chinese-speaking child because of our lack of bilingual resources, including bilingual assessors and assessment tools.

Unfortunately, we do not know how many LEP children are unidentified in our classrooms today. We can only assume the problem exists given the difficulties in distinguishing second language learning from language deficits.

To understand this problem of under-referral more clearly, let's look at some examples of speech and language disorders that may be confused with limited English proficiency.

[TRAINER NOTE]: Pass out handouts, "Partial List of Characteristic of Limited English Proficiency" and "Characteristics of Speech and Language Disorders." Have participants answer the questions posed in the second handout. Lead the group to discussing the points outlined in your Trainer's version of the handout.

[GROUP DISCUSSION]: We are going to look at some examples of characteristics of limited English proficiency. We will then look at some types of speech and language disorders and discuss surface similarities between characteristics of limited English proficiency and "systems" of speech and language deficits.

Partial List of Characteristics of Limited English Proficiency

Difficulties in English Comprehension

- Does not fully understand verbal directions given in English.
- Is not able to recognize names of objects commonly understood by children of that age.
- Does not attend well to lengthy activities conducted in English, e.g. listening to a story.

Difficulties in English Expression

- Has limited vocabulary.
- Speaks in short phrases.
- Uses incorrect language forms, e.g. double negatives, or lack of plural forms.
- Is unable to respond to more complex questions, e.g. "How should we dress on a rainy day?"
- Does not initiate questions or participate in group discussions.
- Can recognize names of objects in English but cannot always use words spontaneously to name these same objects.

Difficulties in English Pronunciation

- Has many false starts and hesitations when speaking.
- Use of English words is largely limited to single syllable words.
- Has difficulties pronouncing consonant clusters, as in the words break, black, crazy, task, start.
- Pronunciation patterns include many sound substitutions, e.g. /s/ for /th/ as in "sing" for "thing;" /l/ for /r/ as in "lice" for "rice."

Characteristics of Speech and Language Disorders

Language Delay or Deficits Due to Auditory Processing Problems

1. What might be some characteristics of this problem?

Trainer Examples	*Trainer Notes*
- Does not fully understand verbal directions given in English.	
- Does not attend well to lengthy activities conducted in English, e.g. listening to a story.	
- Cannot follow longer directions.	

2. Which of these characteristics are similar to those of limited English proficiency? *(All of the above.)*

Expressive Language Delay

1. What might be some characteristics of this problem?

Trainer Examples	*Trainer Notes*
- Has limited vocabulary.	
- Speaks in short phrases.	
- Is unable to respond to more complex questions, e.g. How should we dress on a rainy day?	
- Does not initiate questions or participate in group discussions.	
- Can recognize names of objects in English, but cannot always use words spontaneously to name these same objects.	

2. Which of these characteristics are similar to those of limited English proficiency? *(All of the above.)*

Articulation Problems Due to Speech-Motor Deficits

1. What might be some characteristics of this problem?

Trainer Examples	***Trainer Notes***
• Has many false starts and hesitations when speaking.	
• Use of English words is largely limited to single syllable words.	
• Has difficulties pronouncing consonant clusters, as in the following words break, black, crazy, task, start.	
• Pronunciation patterns include many sound substitutions, e.g. /s/ for /th/ as in "sing": for "thing;" /l/ for /r/ as in "lice" for "rice".	

2. Which of these characteristics are similar to those of limited English proficiency? *(All of the above.)*

Language Delay Due to Mild Mental Retardation

1. What might be some characteristics of this problem?

[TRAINER NOTE]: Discuss how almost all of the characteristics of limited English proficiency are similar on the surface to those found in language delay.

2. Which of these characteristics are similar to those of limited English proficiency?

Summary Discussion of this Activity

We can see how it is very easy to confuse limited English proficiency with speech and language disorders and vice versa. Similarity of characteristics, of course, does not imply that an LEP child has a language disorder. Surface symptoms may have many underlying causes. As an analogy to medicine, a headache may be symptomatic of many different problems such as tension, sinus problems, a blow to the head, or even a brain tumor. How we treat a problem, whether it's related to language systems or headache, depends on its underlying cause.

Assessing language skills in the Chinese-speaking child is a virtual paradox. We use language — English — as the means by which assessment takes place. We typically gather data by directing verbal questions or requests in English. Language is also the domain being tested: we expect to receive verbal responses based on verbal comprehension. For example, if we ask a child, "How did you get to school today?" the expected response, "By bus" or "I walked," first requires that the child understand the English question before providing the English response.

Obviously, when we are unable to use the child's language — Chinese — and the child is unable to respond to the examiner's English, information on language abilities is difficult to gather. But we still need to differentiate the child's difficulties in speaking and responding to English from potential language disorders. As we have already seen in our workshop activity, problems of assessment may relate to both translation and cultural factors. Yet, modifying assessment instruments contains inherent problems.

Let's now consider why modifications to assessments may be problematic.

Problems in Modifying Language Assessment Instruments for Chinese-Speaking Children

When you use a translator, and substitute or omit test items, you do more than simply modify the instrument. You may also be altering

- The procedures,
- The complexity and objectivity of the task, and
- The validity or usefulness of the results.

Procedures

Ordinarily, when you administer an assessment instrument, you follow certain procedures. This ensures objectivity and fairness in the testing process. Procedures are in place to minimize variability and arbitrariness in how tasks are presented to different children. For example, your procedures may specify that you should only provide verbal cues to the child in a particular task. If you were to add additional gestural cues with one child and not another, you would be altering the fairness of the test and what it proposes to measure.

The use of interpreters to assist you in administering the test naturally alters your normal procedures. Different interpreters, particularly those who are untrained in assessment, may not uniformly translate items in a consistent manner.

Complexity and objectivity of the task

Unfortunately, language items are particularly vulnerable to translation problems. Word-for-word translation may not yield a test item that is equivalent to its untranslated form. It may make it more difficult or less difficult. The sum effect changes the nature of the assessment.

The validity or usefulness of the results

An assessment instrument that has been heavily modified loses its standardized validity. That is, when we administer a translated assessment instrument, we have altered the parameters of the test, its procedures, and other aspects which make assessment a standardized, fair, and informative process. To put it simply, modifications may mean we are asking the wrong questions and hence getting the wrong information. This would certainly render the use of all test norms, including IQ, invalid.

Examples of Modifications Problems: Going from English to Chinese

Problems with Translated Items

Vocabulary tests.

Remember that translations from English to Chinese may not maintain the same level of vocabulary difficulty cross-linguistically. When we use an interpreter who is not experienced in assessment procedures, we cannot be sure of the degree of accuracy in which items are being translated. A word such as "outraged" may be simplified by an interpreter to a Chinese word that is no more complex than "very mad." Furthermore, some English words, such as "pet," have no Chinese equivalents. In addition, Chinese and English words which are equivalent in both meaning and level of difficulty may still not be equivalent in frequency of usage in everyday conversation.

Comprehension of verbal requests.

As with vocabulary items, we may alter the complexity of what is being asked by translating verbal requests and phrases. For example, we may be probing the child's ability to comprehend complex sentence structures, such as relatives clauses (e.g. the dog that bit the cat). A sentence translation into Chinese may maintain the essential meaning of the sentence, but not necessarily the level of receptive language skills required.

Problems with Culturally Loaded Items

Vocabulary items.

Some vocabulary tests may contain items that are culturally-loaded, that is they rely heavily upon American cultural experiences. Examples include "pattycake," "jack-in-the-box," "football," or "toboggan."

Achievement tests.

These tests generally assess what the child has achieved according to prescribed group instructional objectives. You might administer a task, for example, which tests the child's recognition of basic concepts as, for example verbal opposites. Materials used in such a task may include those typically found in an American primary school classroom. If the LEP Chinese-speaking child is a recent addition to the classroom, he or she may have been exposed to different classroom instructional materials. The child may have the concept intact, yet may not recognize the instructional materials you use.

Assessment items may relate directly to cumulative experiences — and those experiences may be culturally-bound. If a child fails a language task presented in English or with materials more typical of American culture, the child may not perform well. Poor performance does not necessarily mean the child lacks those language systems skills; it may mean the child lacks those functional skills in English. It is an important distinction.

Our section on assessment further delineates ways to evaluate assessment items, including those probing language areas, for potential bias or translation problems. As an encouraging note, more information on bilingual influences on classroom performance will soon be available through the Bilingual Language Project affiliated with the Department of Education at University of California at Berkeley.

Problems in Selecting and Adapting Assessment Instruments for LEP Children

Problems in Selecting Diagnostic Instruments

Let's assume that an LEP Chinese-speaking child has been referred to you for a language assessment. At that point another problem emerges: Which assessment instruments and procedures should you use with a Chinese-speaking child suspected of having a language disorder? What instruments might be appropriate if the child is language-delayed? Hearing-impaired? Apraxic? Mentally retarded?

Once you have selected the instruments that will provide you with adequate assessment information, you need to also consider whether these instruments can be adapted or translated for assessment of the LEP or NEP Chinese-speaking child. You may need to eliminate some instruments that are clearly not suitable for adaptation, such as, auditory discrimination tasks which rely on perception of like-sounding word pairs.

So that we can quickly understand the scope of the problem in both translating and adapting language assessment instruments, let's take a look at a hypothetical case and a list of the instruments we might consider using in assessing the child.

[TRAINER NOTE]: Provide participants the handout, "Workshop activity: Selecting instruments for assessment of language skills in LEP/NEP Chinese-speaking children."

If this workshop activity is being conducted for a group of speech and language clinicians, you might want to go through the entire list. Or you may simply choose the assessment tools most frequently used by the group.

Save this checklist for further discussion. This same checklist will be used later in discussing bias in assessment and in looking for alternate procedures in speech and language evaluation.

Selecting Instruments for Assessment of Language Skills in LEP/NEP Chinese-Speaking Children

Brief Case Presentation

A 7-year old LEP Chinese-speaking child is referred for severe speech and language delay. Assume for the purpose of this activity that you have little information about this child; that is, no known diagnosis, no other primary or secondary disability. Also assume parents are non-English speaking. Finally, we will also assume you have access to an interpreter.

Quickly review the list of assessment procedures available to you and determine areas in which you would be able to obtain adequate information, as well as areas that present assessment difficulties for you. If you feel you are not able to adequately assess a child in that area, indicate, if possible, whether the problem in assessment is related to *translation* or *cultural* factors; e.g. interpreter needed, tasks not translatable, items are culturally biased.

Assessment Instrument Methods

NOTE: This is not an inclusive list of assessment instrument methods.
You may also wish to suggest others that can be used.

Assessment Method	Problem
Pure tone threshold testing	
Auditory/Speech discrimination task	
Impedance audiometry	
Brain stem audiometry	
Articulation tasks by imitation	
Spontaneous speech-language sample	
Oral mechanism evaluation (oral-motor movements)	

Articulation feature analysis ______________________________

Picture vocabulary test ______________________________

Cognitive language tasks ______________________________

Receptive language tasks ______________________________

Expressive language tasks ______________________________

Observation ______________________________

Developmental history ______________________________

Medical/health history ______________________________

Family history ______________________________

Educational history ______________________________

Social history ______________________________

Assessing Functional English Chinese Language Skills

OBJECTIVE 2:	Participants will have a framework for assessing functional language skills in both English and Chinese.
OUTCOME 2.1	Participants will know why assessment of functional language skills in Chinese and English is important.
OUTCOME 2.2	Participants will know three parameters for comparing functional language skills, in English and Chinese.
OUTCOME 2.3	Participants will know three approaches to gathering information about the child's use of both languages.

Why Comparative Assessment of Functional Language Skills is Important

To understand the child's overall linguistic abilities, we need to evaluate proficiency in both languages. This should be done even if it is clear that the child's native language skills are superior to those in English.

Comparative information about functional language skills enables us to peer more closely into the child's overall language system. We may be working with an LEP child, for example, who has poor expressive language skills in English. To understand more fully whether this is a problem of English proficiency or a true expressive language disorder, we must assess the child's expressive and receptive language skills in Chinese.

Comparative information can give us further hints about the child's language system. For example, we may suspect an LEP child has a language deficit based on uneven language proficiency in English. Our suspicions may be confirmed or negated by the information we gather about the child's abilities in both languages.

Consider these examples:

1) The child has lower English proficiency in expressive areas compared to receptive areas. Yet, in looking at the child's functional language skills in Chinese, we find that the expressive and receptive language skills approximate the same level and are appropriate for her age level. This would suggest that the child has *proficiency problem* in English but probably not a language disorder.

2) The child has lower English proficiency in expressive areas compared to receptive areas. In looking at the child's functional language skills in Chinese, we find that expressive language skills are less developed than receptive skills. This would suggest that the child has an expressive language disorder, since deficits are present in both languages.

Generally speaking, if true language system disorders or deficits are present, they will be evident in both languages.

In addition to comparing skills in both languages, one other consideration is critical in assessing LEP Chinese children: assessment and observation of skills in both languages over time. In assessing any child, you would first establish baseline information and check the child's developmental progress at a later time in, for example, three to six months from the initial assessment. With LEP Chinese-speaking children, this information is especially important. Rate of developmental progress in both languages can clue you to potential language disorders or to problems in learning English as a second language. The child who fails to progress at an expected rate in both languages may indeed have a language disorder.

Comparing Similar Language Parameters

In comparing functional language skills, we need to take an investigative approach of who, what, when, where, why and how. We want to know :

Who	the child uses English and Chinese languages skills with, e.g. peers, adults, parents, siblings.
What	expressive and receptive skills the child uses, e.g. single words, short phrases, complete sentences, code switching.
When	the child uses skills in each language, e.g. when told to speak in English or Chinese, when directed a question in English, when talking to parents.
Where	the child prefers to use English and Chinese, e.g. Chinese in the home, English at school.
Why	the child uses skills in each language, e.g. to socialize with peers, to respond to questions, to ask questions, to initiate conversation.

All of the above help to answer the question of ***how*** the child's skills in both languages compare.

Your assessment of skills in both languages should look at the same parameters of language form and use, including:

Phonological patterns — the child's sound system which encompasses articulation patterns and speech fluency.

Vocabulary – the child's acquired lexical categories (e.g. nouns, verbs, adjectives, locative, modifiers) and the range and level of complexity of actual words in each of those categories.

Syntactic patterns – the child's ability to structure words into phrases, sentences, and increasingly complex structures.

Approaches to Gathering Comparative Information on Functional Language Skills

If you suspect an LEP Chinese speaking student may have a language disorder, your first step might be a comparison of functional language skills in both languages using these approaches:

- Observation
- Informal Language Screening
- Parent Interview

Unless you are fluent in the child's native language, you will need an interpreter who can assist in all three information-gathering approaches. In our workshop module on Assessment, the selection and training of interpreters is more fully discussed. However, to re-cap, the basic criteria for interpreters who will be assisting in language assessment includes:

- Language fluency in both languages being assessed and awareness of dialectal variations.
- Translation skills, including an understanding of the differences between word-for-word translation and context translation
- Assessment administration skills, including an understanding of how to provide verbal instructions or translation without providing additional cues, how to convey the child's responses, and how to recognize test items that are (and those that are not) amenable to translation.

Since the selection of a qualified interpreter is critical to the information you gather in the child's native language, it is highly recommended that you fully review the "Interpreter/Translator Checklist" given in the assessment module, if you have not already done so.

Let's now consider each of these information gathering approaches in more detail.

[TRAINER NOTE]: Provide participants the handout, "Comparing Functional Language Skills in Chinese and English"

Comparing Functional Language Skills in Chinese and English

Informal Observation

If possible, the child should be observed in both classroom and social environments. Assessors should observe for the following, where applicable:

In the classroom

- Ability to follow routine directions
- Ability to follow instructional material
- Attention to, or reliance on, non-verbal cues
- Participation in classroom activities when requested
- Spontaneous participation in activities (which ones?)
- Performance in non-verbal areas, e.g. art, play
- Inclusion in classroom activities by peers
- Type of language use, e.g. to answer questions, make requests, join in songs
- Examples of language use, specifically noting vocabulary use, sentence types, articulation, most complex request able to respond to, most complex sentence structure used

(NOTE: With the assistance of an interpreter, similar observations can be made if the child also attends a Chinese language school or is in a bilingual classroom.)

On the playground

- Language of playmates and, language spoken with playmates
- Types of play child engages in, e.g. group or isolated play
- How language enables child to respond to social-interactive situations, e.g. able to assert that it is his turn, able to participate in social conversation, able to defend self verbally

(NOTE: Interaction with peers can reveal much about which language the child feels most comfortable with — and how motivated the child might be to develop better English proficiency.)

At home

If parents feel more comfortable with Chinese than English, an interpreter should accompany you to the interview.

- Language spoken by parents
- Language spoken by the child to parents
- Language spoken by the child to siblings and vice versa
- Language spoken by child on the phone
- Language on TV or radio programs the family listens to
- Language of other materials in the home, e.g. newspapers, games

(NOTE: While observations in the home may be quite useful, it may not always be possible to enter the child's home for this purpose. If this is the case, you might gather information about these same areas through a parent interview. The phrasing of your questions will be important and should not unintentionally convey that English usage in the home is preferred.)

Comparing Functional Language Skills in Chinese and English

Informal Language Screening

In contrast to more formal assessments, you do not need to use specific instruments in this type of screening. You do need to plan how you will gather information to make the session as constructive as possible, especially if you are using an interpreter.

Unless you are fluent in both Chinese and English, an interpreter needs to be involved. You should also tape-record the session, so that the information can be transcribed, reviewed with the interpreter, and analyzed (of course, permission for tape-recording must first be obtained.)

Spontaneous language use

Your protocol for eliciting information in this area might be similar to that which you use with any child. But you will need to elicit language samples in both Chinese and English and in the same context. Here are some basic suggestions:

- You might request that the child guide you and the interpreter through his or her classroom, to talk about materials, where various peers sit, and what activities take place in different areas of the room. The child can alternately talk about these areas with you and the interpreter in both English and Chinese.
- You might select a picture book without words and ask the child to tell a story, encouraging the child to elaborate on details. On the other hand, if the child has learned Chinese and English in different contexts (Chinese with family and neighbors and English at school, for example), you may want to elicit speech samples for the two languages in different contexts. You may want to elicit an English sample in the context of the classroom and a Chinese sample in the context of conversation about everyday matters in the home, stories and rhymes taught in the home, etc.

By sampling spontaneous language use, you should be able to gather information revealing characteristics of vocabulary use, sentence complexity, and the ease in which the child uses both languages.

Observations for accompanying non-language clues

Additionally, during these sessions, you will want to observe both metalinguistic and extralinguistic cues. Metalinguistic cues may include features that signal the child's awareness of difficulties in using English or Chinese. For example, self-corrections and self-editing (that is, comments such as "that's not right") can cue the examiner as to the child's ease with the language being used.

Extralinguistic cues, such as facial or gestural expressions, may also tell you whether the child's use of English presents a struggle. If you do not observe these extralinguistic characteristics in the child's use of Chinese, you might conclude that "language struggle" stems more from second language acquisition proficiency difficulties.

Vocabulary sampling

In comparing language skills in Chinese and English, you should look for examples that characterize the level of vocabulary used, as well as specific vocabulary categories that have been acquired, e.g. nouns, verbs, locatives, modifiers.

In probing vocabulary skills in both languages, bear in mind that some terms may be language/dialect or culture-specific. For example, terms for eating utensils may only be known in Chinese and for items more typical of those used in the home, e.g. bowls and chopsticks. On the other hand, school materials or equipment may have only been learned in English through school experiences.

Assessors should elicit names for vocabulary items separately for Chinese and English and as naturally as possible. For example, if you ask the child to name objects in English in response to the question "What's this?" the same question format should be used to elicit responses in Chinese. That is, you should avoid obtaining an English response in one way and then seeking its Chinese counterpart by asking the child "How do you say that in Chinese?" The latter approach may be more indicative of translation abilities, rather than language skills.

Sentence repetition

Another method for determining functional language skills in both Chinese and English involves sentence repetition of both simple and increasingly complex grammatical and syntactical structures.

Generally, children imitate only those sentences that are equivalent to already acquired structures within their language system. Thus, a child would not be able to imitate a sentence that is more complex than what is ordinarily produced in spontaneous speech.

One big caution, however, on interpreting results based on imitation tasks: some children with auditory processing problems may not be able to imitate longer utterances. Therefore, it is difficult to interpret the nature of a child's expressive language deficits from the results of repetition tasks alone.

Parent Interview

[TRAINER NOTE]: More information on structuring and preparing for the parent interview is found in Module 1. The following assumes the participants have reviewed those materials.

In interviewing both parents, care must be taken to explain the nature of the interview. For example, when being asked about the extent of Chinese and English used in the home, parents may feel their sense of responsibility as parents is being questioned or judged, (e.g., the less English used in the home, the less responsible the parent has been in educating the child.) Thus, it may be more efficacious to conduct the interview process as a discussion rather than a rigid series of questions and short answers. You may wish to ask how both parents and children communicate in the home. For example:

- Can the child communicate well with grandparents?
- What Chinese stories does the child know?
- Do parents feel the child's Chinese language skills are where they should be for the child's age?
- Does the child have Chinese reading and writing skills?

Recognizing Common Second Language Production Errors

OBJECTIVE 3:	Participants will have a framework for recognizing second language production errors
OUTCOME 3.1	Participants will understand the concept of predictability of speech and language errors in second language learning.
OUTCOME 3.2	Participants will know four common forms of English speech production errors that might be found in the LEP Chinese-speaking child's speech.
OUTCOME 3.3	Participants will know five common English grammatical errors that may be evident in the Chinese-speaking child's language.

[TRAINER NOTES]: Much of the information in this section is geared to participants with a background in speech and language assessment. If you are presenting this section to a group of speech and language clinicians, include the additional notes designated by "For Speech and Language Clinicians" You may also wish to use the materials located in the Appendices.

Predictability of Speech and Language Errors

We will assume you have gathered information about the LEP child's functional language skills in both English and Chinese. You notice that the child has some functional English language skills, but, at the same time, the child's speech and language productions in English contain numerous "errors." At this point, you may wonder if these errors signify potential language deficits or if they are simply typical errors that second language learners produce.

The problem you face is one of differentiating between common second language production errors and characteristics more typical of language deficits. Discerning the two requires a three-fold investigation:

- An evaluation of language production and comprehension in English;
- An evaluation of language production and comprehension in Chinese; and
- A comparative analysis of information gathered in the two areas.

Even though the Chinese-speaking child's use of English may be limited, information in this area can be rich with clues. For one thing, although the child may be more fluent in Chinese, unless you are fluent in Chinese, it will be difficult for you to analyze the full significance of the Chinese data. By looking first at the English language data, you may observe possible clues to problems, and these clues can guide your questions to the interpreter on the appropriateness of the child's productions in Chinese.

[FOR SPEECH AND LANGUAGE CLINICIANS]. As an example, you might find that the child has frequently substituted many fricative sounds with plosives — as might be typical with children with less well developed speech patterns. But this observation may clue you to ask the interpreter if the child's Chinese speech production contains similar examples of "simplified" speech. You might review the tape of the child's Chinese language sample and ask the interpreter to listen for the presence of words pronounced in a manner different from the way the examiner would pronounce the word (mindful, of course, of regional/dialectal variations).

However, to track down every English language production error and compare it to a possible Chinese counterpart would be extremely time consuming. Some errors may be wholly predictable, that is, they can be explained as typical with any child learning a second language.

[TRAINER NOTE]: Ask the audience the following question to stimulate discussion about language production errors, the role of language interference and predictability of errors.

How Might English Language Errors Be Related to the Child's Chinese Language System?

[TRAINER NOTE]: The child may apply "rules" of Chinese language to English. Whenever we learn anything new, we begin a process of discriminating, sorting, and finding similarities and differences to other experiences and information already stored in our brains. It is an unconscious process. In the beginning, the similarities that we perceive may be gross ones. As we become more experienced and can take in more information, we can fine-tune the details and perceive more discrete differences.

This same process happens in learning a second language. We use our first language to help us learn the ropes, so to speak, of the other language. We may make many errors and many of these are predictable: they derive from the influence of our native language.

Similarity of First and Second Language Error Types

Research on second language learning confirms that such errors are very much similar to errors made by young children learning a first language. These studies confirm that second language learners, as a whole, tend to produce similar language errors.

This is significant for two reasons: first, we can apply our knowledge of first language acquisition in understanding second language acquisition, and second, we need to re-evaluate the degree to which the primary language interferes with, or influences, second language acquisition.

As we talk about production differences between the two language systems, our reference to "errors" is purely a comparative one. "Errors" are differences from the target language, in this case English. It is natural however, for children becoming bilingual to produce approximations of English words on the basis of their primary language system, and for this reason, such "errors" are not necessarily deviant or pathological.

With this background in mind, let's now look at more detailed examples of errors that may occur in two areas: speech production and language production.

Speech Production Errors

You may find that the LEP Chinese-speaking child produces words with many misarticulations. In discerning whether errors are "predictable" or "deviant," you need to first understand some basic types of English mispronunciations that may appear in the second language learner's speech.

Substitutions

As with children learning a first language, second language learners will substitute sounds that are more complex. In contrast to first language learners, however, second language learners may substitute English language speech sounds with ones that are similar to those found in Chinese.

For example, English has a sound /th/, as in the words "thumb", which is not found in Chinese. A sound that is produced in a similar way is the sound /s/. (Both sounds are what we term phonologically as fricatives. The only differences in the two sounds is the place of articulation. /Th/ is produced with the tongue tip farther forward than /s/. The Chinese child might then substitute words that contain /th/ with /s/. Hence, a word, such as "something," might be pronounced by the Chinese child as "somesing."

[TRAINER NOTE]: If you are fluent in Chinese or another foreign language, you can illustrate the above information with examples. You might, for example, produce some common Chinese words, have the class try to imitate them, and indicate how the class's different pronunciation of the Chinese word reflects their English sound system.

Omissions

As with first language learners, Chinese children learning English as a second language may omit sounds. This may occur because some sounds in English occur in words in positions that are not found in Chinese. For example, Cantonese does not have words ending with the sound /l/, as English does (e.g. ball). Thus, a Cantonese-speaking child learning English may omit the sound for those words ending in /l/.

Simplifications

Speech sounds in English may also be simplified by second language learners. For example, consonant clusters such as /bl/, /kl/, /st/, and so forth, are not found in Chinese. The LEP Chinese-speaking child may simplify these consonant clusters to simply /b/, /k/, /t/, and /s/, respectively.

Misapplication of Tone and Stress

You might also find speech production errors that relate to tone or stress patterns in longer words. Chinese contains many monosyllabic words, although it has a number of polysyllabic words well-known as compounds. English, on the other hand, has a great many words that are polysyllabic. In Chinese, each syllable of every monosyllabic word or a compound word has a distinctive pitch, referred to as tone. In Mandarin, there are four basic tones; in Cantonese, there are as many as nine. The LEP Chinese-speaking child may say English individual multisyllabic words and sentences with intonation patterns that resemble Chinese tonal patterns. In addition, the stress patterns in Chinese and English differ and a Chinese-speaking child may produce English words with a Chinese stress pattern.

All of the foregoing types of speech production error types generally occur less frequently as the child begins to auditorily perceive finer speech differences. Children who have speech production errors that are more characteristic of second language learners would benefit from ESL classes, which train children to listen for these finer differences and to practice new sounds.

[TRAINER NOTE]: If your training group includes many speech and language clinicians, you may want to supplement this section with "APPENDIX, Comparing English and Chinese sound systems."

Common Grammatical Production Errors

Errors are Similar Among All Bilingual Children

As some research indicates, syntactic and morphological errors seem to be similar among children learning second languages, regardless of the primary language. Many of these error types are similar in nature to errors young children make in learning a first language. For the most part, your knowledge of first language acquisition will be helpful in predicting error types in LEP Chinese-speaking children.

To illustrate, an English construction such as "Is he tall?" will likely be produced by the LEP Chinese-speaking child (as well as other LEP children) as "He tall?" If we were to predict how a child would say "Is he tall?" based on straight translation to Chinese, we would get "He tall not tall?," which does not occur. On the other hand, a few syntactic errors may occur as a result of specific interference from the child's native language. Here is an example: In Mandarin, the verb meaning "to give," pronounced "geil," is also used as a benefactive preposition meaning "for." If one wants to say "I'll do a favor for you" in Mandarin, the literal word order is "I for you do a favor." The Mandarin word "for" is identical to the word which is used as the full verb "give" in other sentences. One Mandarin-speaking child, who had learned some English, wanted to help an English-speaking adult find a lost pen and said, "I give you find it." The child used the English word "give" as a preposition meaning "for" (she meant, "I'll find it *for* you"), and thereby spoke a sentence with English vocabulary words but using Mandarin grammar.

How Do LEP Children Learn Rules?

In learning English, LEP children develop systematic rules for producing different types of constructions. Early on, a child learning English learns to use "no" or "not" as a means of making the sentence a negative construction. The child may develop a general internalized and subconscious rule, something on the order of "insert *not* before a verb or word that acts like a verb." As the child becomes more English proficient, more refined rules may develop, e.g. attaching the negative after modals, copula BE, auxiliaries, etc. We can only wonder about the strategies that children employ to discover these rules.

In fact, consider the many rules and exceptions to rules that children must acquire to become proficient in English. Many rules that govern English constructions are nebulous, to say the least, and even the native English speaker would be hard-pressed to explain differences between some grammatical and ungrammatical sentences. For example, we can say sentences such as:

- *I bought her a dress.*
- *I picked up the phone.*

Yet, the following sentences, which seem to have parallel constructions, are not grammatical:

- *I opened her the door.*
- *I picked up it.*

The above is simply to illustrate the extremely subtle language rules that second language learners must internalize.

Error Types

Now let's look at some examples of common error types with more basic English constructions. The language error types we will refer to are those given by Delay, Hernandez-Chavez and Burt. In analyzing the linguistic constructions produced by LEP children with whom you work, you may want to refer to these categories in determining sources of errors.

We will look at examples of English constructions that are not available in Chinese, provide you with English examples of their use, and give the predicted error that might be produced by an LEP child. The error types we will consider are:

- Over-regularization
- Omission of major constituents
- Omission of grammatical morphemes
- Broad use of archiforms
- Alternating use of members of a class
- Double marking
- Misordering.

1) Over-regularization

As with young children learning a first language, second language learners learn regular rules and apply these rules broadly until they learn the *exceptions* to the rules.

Type	Regular Rule	Error Example
Past tense	Add -ed to verb	breakted, broked, runned
Plurals	Add -s or -es to end of singular nouns	mans, mouses, mices, tooths

2) Omission of major constituents

The early utterances of second language learners are often shortened — much like telegraphic speech of young children. Young LEP children may feel more comfortable using these shortened expressions. Older LEP children may rely on learned phrases, such as "I don't know" to circumvent having to respond with inadequate English.

English	LEP child
I want to go out on the playground.	Go there (gestures)

3) Omission of grammatical morphemes

English is a highly inflected language compared to Chinese, and it inflects for features such as plural, tense, and non-verb agreement. Chinese, on the other hand, does not inflect for these grammatic constructions. In early second language learning, the LEP child may simply omit the grammatical morphemes used in English for inflection. Morphemes not found in Chinese include those listed below:

Morphemes	Predicted Error
plural (-s)	three book, pair of shoe, many chair
possessive ('s)	Elsie godson, today weather
present tense (-s)	She go to school.
past tense (-ed)	Last week we see movie.
auxiliaries: do, have	You have there
copula BE	She my little sister, he famous
articles: a, the	She read telegram; she got gift
prepositions: to	I arrive San Francisco airport; Switch his day off Friday to Saturday
conjunctions: and, if	I don't know it'll do or not

4) Broad use of archiforms

Archiform usage is another form of generalization in which one form is selected and used broadly. For example, Chinese does not use gender distinct singular pronominals, such as *he, she, him, her, his*. An LEP child may select one of these pronominals and use it for the entire class of pronominals. Archiforms are prevalent in both early and later states of second language learning.

Archiform	Examples of over-uses
pronominals: he, she	"him" selected for all singular pronouns
demonstrative adjectives: this, that, these	selection of "that" for all cases that book, that books, that houses

5) Alternating use of members of a class

During the early stages of second language learning, bilingual children begin adding lexical items — vocabulary that belongs to a particular class. Whereas the child may have used an archiform "she" to refer to all persons in the pronominal form, the child will eventually acquire the other forms, "he," "she," and "it." These may then alternate freely, and may not always be applied correctly. Bilingual children, it seems, learn general classes of lexical items and then add additional vocabulary to those classes.

At a later stage of acquisition, they gradually learn that there are restrictions as to when each of those items can be used, e.g. "she" is only used for female referents.

Lexical Class	Error Example
pronouns	I asked John if she is going (where "she" refers back to "John")
demonstratives	This cats, those dogs
past irregular	she gone; John has went to bed; I had wrote to Auntie

6) Double marking

As the child learns additional rules, another type of over-generalization often occurs in semantic-syntactic features such as negation, tense, and more complex structures. Because the rules are not refined, errors of double marking are seen in many LEP children's language productions.

Type	Error	Example
tense	tense marked in auxiliary and verb	She didn't went.
negation	negation marked in quantifier	She don't have none.
predicate	equation marked in two copula positions	Is this is a cow?

7) Misordering

Misordering is generally confined to major constituents, e.g. adverbial phrases, as in "I two weeks ago went to the hospital." Speakers often make errors in constructions requiring more refined surface re-ordering, as with the re-ordering of pronominals as direct and indirect objects. The Chinese language orders constituents — the major parts of sentences — differently from English, and this may account for some actual misordering of forms. For example, conversational Chinese frequently uses topicalization of objects. If a similar order is applied to English sentences, the surface elements may appear misordered, as in "Chinese movies I like very much."

Constituent	Error Example
direct object	I read aloud it. I pick up her.
adverbial	How is weather last week in Bay Areas?

Recognizing Clues that Signal Language Disorders in LEP Chinese Speaking Children

OBJECTIVE 4:	Participants will have a framework for recognizing clues that signal speech or language disorders in LEP Chinese-speaking children.
OUTCOME 4.1	Participants will know ten clues that may help differentiate speech and language disorders from limited English proficiency.

Introduction

Since we lack appropriate assessment instruments for LEP Chinese-speaking children, what alternate approaches can we use? How do we recognize features of language and speech disorders in LEP children?

To recap what we have covered so far in this workshop:

- **We have summarized some key problems of language assessment; some of those problems relate to our lack of bilingual assessors and instruments normed to our target population.**
- **We have looked at ways to gather comparative language information about the child's use of both Chinese and English.**
- **We have looked at common second language learning errors — errors that are predictable for second language learners.**

Another part of the picture is recognizing those characteristics that signal language delay or language disorders. Part of the confusion for assessors, however, is the difficulty in discerning which characteristics are simply part of the second language learning picture.

In this section, we will look at some clues that signal speech and language delay or disorders.

Clues to Speech and Language Disorders

Language delay in young children under age seven years is easily confused with second language learning. As we have already mentioned, many second language errors resemble first language learning. Language delay is a symptom of potential learning problems or language deficits. It generally mirrors the same sequence of first language milestones, albeit at a slower pace. Still, there are a number of clues that call attention to the fact that the child's problem is more likely language delay requiring speech and language intervention. These clues include:

- Paucity of vocabulary
- Medical history indicating prenatal or neonatal difficulties
- Low mean length utterance in both languages
- Communicative difficulties in the home
- Continued delay in both languages over time
- Language delay in the presence of other disabilities
- Speech distortions
- Speech dysfluencies
- Difficulties in performing oral-motor movements
- Unevenness of performance in different language areas

All of the above clues contain a common thread: If the child has a language deficit, it will be evident in both languages. That is, language disorders do not present themselves in just one language in the bilingual child. If the LEP Chinese-speaking child is language delayed for example, both languages are affected.

Let's look at each of these areas in more detail.

Paucity of Vocabulary

Our assessment needs to look at both quantitative as well as qualitative parameters of vocabulary acquisition. To put it simply, it is not just how many words the child knows and uses, but the variety of word types, and how these word types are used. Our inventory of the child's vocabulary should include:

- Type of lexical categories in English, e.g. nouns, verbs, prepositions, adjectives, quantifiers, demonstratives, reflexives

- Type of lexical categories in Chinese, e.g. nouns, grammatical markers, object markers, time indicators

- A list of semantic cases in which different words are used, e.g. whether nouns are used as agents, objects, possessors, etc.

In gathering information on these categories, we should also include examples of actual word items within each category. Initially, our inventory can be derived from spontaneous language samplings. We can also administer vocabulary tests using available instruments. (More on modifications in the next section.)

Clues that the problem is a language deficit

- We might suspect a language deficit is the problem if both languages show a paucity of lexical categories and specific vocabulary words typically seen for that age range.
- While we might see temporary delays in vocabulary acquisition in children beginning to learn a second language, a continued delay signals potential language learning problems.

Clues from Medical History

With all children we assess, it is crucial to gather information on medical history. Mild learning disabilities, for example, may be correlated with prenatal or neonatal difficulties. In fact, one study (Family Physician, April 1982) reported that learning disabilities, and in particular *language delay*, are linked with hypocalcemia (low calcium levels) and low birth weight. In this study 52% of a group of children with learning disabilities had similar problems at birth. The learning disability was first evidenced as language delay by age two-and-a half.

We realize that medical information is not always easy to gather from other countries. In this case, parent interview regarding the presence of difficulties at birth might be an alternate means of gathering this information.

Clues from Mean Length Utterance (MLU)

Mean length utterance is the average number of morphemes contained in each utterance of the child's spontaneous language use. We might expect some disproportion in English compared with Chinese MLU in the LEP Chinese-speaking child. For example, a child at age five years might have a MLU of 5.0 in Chinese and only a MLU of 2.5 in English.

We might suspect language delay, however, if MLU is low in both languages with respect to age. A MLU of 3.0 in both languages would be low for a five year old child and signals potential language problems warranting further investigation.

In addition, however, there is a third possibility: A child may show a disproportion in Chinese as compared to English and may still have a language disorder. That is, the child may be delayed in acquiring Chinese as a native language and show a low MLU for a Chinese-speaking child of comparable age, and, at the same time, show even lower ability in English due, perhaps, to less exposure to the language.

While we do not yet have sufficient research to determine average MLUs for Chinese by age increments, individual case studies have shown that most Chinese children by age 28 months have a MLU of approximately 3.0, which roughly corresponds to that of children learning English as a first language. These studies also found that MLUs continued to increase at approximately the same rate as they did for English-learning children. If anything, Chinese MLUs at different ages *should* be somewhat lower, since Chinese has fewer morphological markings, such as plural forms.

Communicative Difficulties in the Home

Background information about home language use may provide useful insights as to the child's use of language to communicate. Assessors should note how the child uses both languages to socialize with parents, peers and other adults. For example, the fact that an eight-year old child is unable to express himself/herself adequately with parents — or that a child exhibits communication frustration — may indicate a possible communicative disorder.

Parents may also provide information that alert you to the child's difficulties. This information, however, may not be expressed as "language delay." You need to be aware of other descriptive clues, such as that the child is "easily frustrated," "babyish," or "ill-mannered." The language-disordered child may be limited in his or her language interaction with parents and peers. Even young children should be able to initiate, respond to, and sustain social conversations. One study estimates that by age three, children with normal language development should be able to sustain a series of 18-20 utterances (Prutting and Rees, 1978).

Continued Delay in Both Languages Over Time

We have already alluded to the need to watch the child's language development over time. As this is such an important factor, we should recap why this is critical with LEP children. Children learning a second language generally progress quickly from stage to stage, exhibiting increasing levels of language complexity, English language use, and facility in communicating in a variety of situations. The child's Chinese language skills should also continue to progress, with new skills being added commensurate with age.

The child with potential language delay related to other learning problems, such as auditory processing problems or cognitive deficits, will likely show slower progress in both languages.

Let's consider an example:

A child normally understands some opposite concepts and words by age five. The LEP Chinese-speaking child, for example, might recognize the opposites "fat/thin" in Chinese. The child may not know these specific words in English and consequently, may not perform well in tasks using these words in English. However, since the child has the opposite concept internally and can demonstrate in Chinese, we would expect that with some additional modeling and experience it, the child would quickly learn the English equivalents for the verbal opposites.

The language delayed child, on the other hand, may have difficulties quickly grasping these opposite concepts in both languages.

Presence of Other Handicapping Conditions

Language delay or disorders frequently accompany other disabilities such as mental retardation, autism, cerebral palsy, and neurological handicapping conditions. In addition, language development difficulties may be apparent in children with hearing impairments. It is essential that all children suspected of having a language delay be examined for hearing loss. Unfortunately, there have been cases of non-English-speaking children with profound hearing losses that were not detected until a later age. These children's problems were overlooked because the children were seen as having second language learning difficulties.

Speech Distortions

While second language learners naturally make phonological errors based, in part, on their primary language sound system, we might suspect a speech disorder if errors resemble "distortions" rather than substitutions, omissions, or simplifications. Distortions are deviant articulations that are not predictable on the basis of the primary language. Distortions or deviant articulation may be signaled by misarticulation of an entire class of sounds, e.g. fricatives or all voiceless phonemes.

To ascertain whether this is the case, you will need to further examine if distortions are present in the child's production of Chinese speech as well. Speech disorders are probable if the manner of deviation is evident in both languages.

Stuttering, Voice and Resonance Disorders

Stuttering, voice, and resonance disorders should be evident to the experienced speech and language clinician regardless of the language the child speaks. Hypernasality, for example, is not a normal phonological feature of Chinese and may indicate the presence of a structural abnormality such as palatal insufficiency. Stuttering that is present in both languages is also not a normal development of second language learning. A hoarse or harsh vocal quality should be easily recognizable to the speech-language clinician.

Difficulties in Performing Oral-Motor Movements

The ability to perform oral-motor movements is based on neurological speech-motor abilities and is not specific to languages. Thus, a child who has difficulties performing basic movements may likely have a speech-motor problem, and this problem may also result in speech deficits in both languages.

Unevenness in Performance in Different Language Areas

Unevenness in language performance hints strongly at possible language deficits. The expressive language-disordered child, for example, may show receptive language skills in Chinese that are superior to her expressive skills in Chinese. The child with auditory processing problems may have uneven receptive language skills: the child may do well in recognizing names for many objects, but show difficulties responding to longer requests or repeating a series of names or numbers.

Keep in mind, however, that semantic and syntactic errors, while typical in language delay and other linguistic disorders, may be difficult to differentiate from error types typical of second language learners. For example, children with linguistic disorders may omit copula "be", or use incorrect pronoun forms; both errors are typical of second language learners as well. On the other hand, linguistically disordered children generally do not progress to develop new and more complex linguistic structures. Bilingual children with normal language development will eventually begin developing more semantically and syntactically complex structures.

The above ten clues by no means exhaust the various types of characteristics of language and speech disorders.

[TRAINER NOTE]: Ask the audience to contribute other clues of language disorders.

Adapting Speech and Language Procedures and Instruments

OBJECTIVE 5:	Participants will have a framework for modifying language instruments for assessment of LEP Chinese-speaking children
OUTCOME 5.1	Participants will know four types of language tasks that are not amenable to translation.
OUTCOME 5.2	Participants will have a checklist for reviewing how various language instruments may be modified for assessment of LEP Chinese American children.

When Translation of Assessment Instruments is Not Appropriate

In this last section, we will refer back to our list of assessment instruments that we looked at in the beginning of this workshop. We are now ready to review this list more carefully and determine ways that we might modify these instruments for assessment of Chinese-speaking children. It is important to reiterate that norms of instruments (once modified) are not valid and should not be used or cited.

[TRAINER NOTE]: Indicate to participants that further information on selecting and modifying assessment instruments is found in Module 3. That module also contains information on interpreting results obtained through modified instruments.

Throughout this workshop, we have emphasized the need to look at linguistic parameters in both Chinese and English when assessing an LEP Chinese-speaking child. This obviously means that our assessment instruments will need to be translated, hopefully by someone experienced with assessment procedures. However, some language tasks are not amenable to translation. They include:

- **Articulation and Speech Discrimination Tasks**

  Both of these instrument types are *language specific*. Word-for-word translation of word pairs, in English auditory discrimination tasks will not yield minimally contrastive word pairs in Chinese.

- **Culture-Specific Items**

  Some language items are "culturally loaded." Translation will not necessarily render these items into Chinese equivalents. Items that are "red flags" – those to be suspicious of – include pictorially represented names for household objects, clothing, sports equipment, actions or games, professions, and historically related items, e.g. Thanksgiving, Pilgrim.

- **Shadings of Meanings**

  Chinese, like English, has fine shadings of meanings, but these may be difficult to accurately translate. You may also find interpreter variation in how descriptive words are translated. For example, you might ask a roomful of interpreters to translate the following word pairs:

  sad/depressed

  happy/elated

  lukewarm/warm

  angry/outraged

You will likely find that these pairs can be translated in many different ways.

- **Grammatically Complex Sentences**

  Language tasks which attempt to assess comprehension of increasingly complex sentences or phrases do not necessarily preserve the same level of linguistic complexity when translated.

  Given these above cautions, we will now look at how specific assessment instrument types can and cannot be modified.

Checklist for Modifying Speech and Language Assessment Instruments

Type of Assessment

Auditory/Speech Discrimination Task

Gross auditory discrimination tasks may include discrimination between noisemakers, e.g. pointing to the picture of a bell upon hearing a bell ring, and pointing to a picture of a telephone upon hearing a telephone ring. Keep in mind that some noises in our environment are culturally-specific. Fire engines and doorbells, for example, may be foreign to the Chinese child raised in a small rural village. You will need to consider each situation individually. Reviewing the child's background information is helpful in this regard.

Speech discrimination tasks may include differentiation between like-sounding word pairs which requires discrimination of consonant phonemes or vowels, e.g. "cat/can." Finer discrimination skills are required for perceiving differences between similar phoneme classes, as in the sounds /p/ and /b/ as differentiated in the words "cap/cab."

Keep in mind that speech discrimination using word pair contrasts also require vocabulary comprehension skills as well, and some words may be culturally-loaded or unfamiliar. Furthermore, translating a word pair into Chinese is not appropriate, since this will not result in a word pair that is appropriate for speech discrimination purposes. These tasks then may be useful in determining the Chinese child's level of speech discrimination in English, but not for overall evaluation of auditory discrimination skills. Results will not reveal hearing loss nor developmental maturity of the child's speech perception skills in general.

You might try to devise a similar word-pair contrast test by combining like-sounding Chinese pairs. However, without having these "homemade" instruments normed, you would be hard-pressed to come up with any meaningful results.

Sound Localization

Sound localization tasks may include having the child turn toward sounds as they are produced. These include environmental sounds, speech sounds, and finer auditory cues testing a range of auditory frequencies. Task explanations should be explained in the child's language with appropriate demonstration and reinforcement.

Impedance Audiometry and Brain Stem Audiometry

Testing requiring physiologic and neurological responses will probably not involve difficulties with a non-English-speaking child. Examiners, however, may want to consider parental attitudes toward testing that may reveal a hearing loss. Hearing aids in mainland China, for example, are rarely used, whereas acupuncture followed with lip-reading training are the preferred courses of treatment.

Articulation Tasks by Imitation

Imitation tasks generally probe skills already developed within the child's language or speech system. Imitation may give the assessor some information about sounds within the English language system which the child has acquired as a second language. Imitation of English words may also provide information about sound errors based on the child's Chinese speech sound system. Imitation tasks in English, on the other hand, may not be an accurate means of pinpointing actual articulatory or speech disorders. For this purpose, the examiner needs to gather information about the child's dominant language system — Chinese -- in discerning the nature of production errors.

Spontaneous Speech and Language Sample

As with all children, spontaneous speech sampling may be more informative than imitation tasks or responses elicited through question-and-answer situations. Assessors can elicit spontaneous speech and language samples through social conversation, observation of natural peer and family interactions, or by asking the child to retell a story or event.

Spontaneous speech sampling may indicate the child's mastery of English sounds, but without additional information about the child's use of Chinese in natural discourse, data may not be sufficient for evaluating potential speech and/or language disorders. Some disorders may be apparent cross-linguistically including stuttering, hypernasality, or severe oral-motor deficits which result in distorted speech patterns.

Cognitive Language Tasks

Psycholinguistic tasks may probe cognitive language domains of children and are useful in looking at strengths and weaknesses in related parameters. Assessors must be cautious in using items which assume a level of English and American cultural knowledge. For example, items which ask children to repeat words may require a certain familiarity with words on a semantic, syntactic, and phonologic level.

Tasks which require children to look for semantic absurdities also require prior knowledge of items, and these items may be culturally-loaded. Consequently, test items may not be as valuable for probing intrinsic cognitive language skills of organization, perception, and association.

Ideally, a team of assessors, including someone familiar with both the Chinese and English languages and cultures, will participate in the evaluation. If interpreter services are required, the interpreter should also be experienced in the parameters and approaches of assessment. An unskilled interpreter may not be sophisticated in testing parameters, and may interpret items which bias the assessment. As with English opposites, an alternate way to express the opposite of "pretty" is "not pretty," and accepting this response may defeat the purpose of task, which seeks to differentiate more subtle semantic elements contained in lexical items.

Receptive Language Tasks

Assessment of receptive language areas often requires both verbal and non-verbal responses to verbally administered test items. Assessment may probe vocabulary acquisition and language organization or conceptual skills (e.g. opposites, categories, numerical concepts, spatial directions). Obviously, a test administered in English to an LEP child will provide limited information.

Translated assessments may also contain limitations, which depend on the assessment approach used. For example, some assessments may select pictorial representations of common objects associated with words, and these pictures may be culturally-loaded. As an example, we may ask a child to differentiate opposite concepts such as "fast/slow" and these may be pictorially represented by a rabbit and a turtle, both of which are animals frequently found in American folklore. We need to ensure that these animals are also a part of the Chinese LEP child's experiences in using them for opposites recognition. An examiner or interpreter who is familiar with Chinese cultural experiences may be helpful in this regard.

Other receptive language "red flags" include assessment approaches which use a particular syntactic form that cannot be used naturally in the child's primary language. For example, we may use a form such as "Show me dog/Show me dogs," in which the plural distinctions are carried within the phonologic form of plural -s attached to the noun. Chinese does not contain plural morphemes as such. As assessors, then we need to be aware of the "bottomline," so to speak, in what we are testing. Chinese children also develop plural concepts, but these are acquired through learning other semantic and syntactic markers that may not be readily translatable.

As one alternate approach, assessors may first review items which the Chinese LEP child fails, evaluate those assessment items individually for bias or appropriateness, and then discuss ways in which these areas might be more accurately assessed (e.g. through translation equivalents or through altering the assessment procedures). Items may be found unacceptable for the following:

- Form of elicitation
- Pictorial or object representation
- Level of cultural experience required
- Form of response required

In altering assessment items, we concurrently alter the assessment process. Nonetheless alterations may reveal informative aspects of the child's language functioning. Alterations require our questioning the following:

- Is the item of equivalent complexity in its translated form?
- If other representations are used, are they of equivalent complexity?
- Is the form of response that is required of equivalent complexity?

We need to avoid translated assessments that both increase or decrease the level of difficulty, since our assessment purpose is not to simply have the child pass each item. For example, we may have an American English assessment item which requires the child to sort objects according to categories. We may have a miscellaneous group of objects or pictures which can be sorted into "items used for eating," "items which are eaten," "items which transport," etc. If we adjust some of these items, for example, eliminating kitchen utensils that may not be familiar to a Chinese child, we need to replace those items with an equal number of items which will require a similar level of language organization.

Expressive Language Tasks

As with receptive language areas, expressive language tasks require a level of verbal understanding and verbal responses. If the former is lacking, the latter will also be affected. Expressive language tasks may be useful in language proficiency testing; but by themselves, will not reveal linguistic disorders. To evaluate for linguistic deficits, we need to look at each item on the assessment and evaluate what the item is attempting to probe, e.g. mean length of utterance; acquisition of syntactic structures (such as question formation and negation); or use of morphemes (plurals or use of specific semantic forms such as reflexives). We then need to find alternate ways to probe similar areas in the child's primary language. Familiarity with Chinese language characteristics is crucial, as translations may not be equivalent in complexity. The non-Chinese-speaking assessor will need the assistance of an interpreter with some knowledge of testing parameters.

In assessing for possible linguistic deficits, both languages will need to be evaluated. With a younger child it would also be helpful to look at the child's performance longitudinally. For example, we may find that the child's mean length utterance does not change over a year's time at a stage when MLU should increase perceptibly. This may signal difficulties in language development. We may find that the child does not express negation correctly in Chinese. If we are using a Chinese interpreter, we need to ask the interpreter about his/her perceptions of the child's productions. We might then compare the child's (perceived) productions with the "correct" forms provided by the interpreter.

The language of the questions and instructions we give to the interpreter for translation must be carefully analyzed. In colloquial English "Who did you give the book to?" is perfectly acceptable and certainly not linguistically deviant. The English standardized form "To whom did you give the book?" may be infrequently used in conversation, even among adults. Sentences may also be translated with a variety of meaning equivalents. Consider the question "Where did the dog go?" We can use any number of ways to express the same question, e.g. "Which direction did the dog take?" "In which direction did the dog go?" "Where has the dog gone?" etc. Thus, in our use of interpreters, we need to be cautious about assuming that translations will be equivalent. We may want to ask the interpreter whether there are other ways to express the same thing and whether one form is more difficult than another.

Observation

Both informal and structured observation can reveal much about natural language functioning, i.e. language in context. Children who have language difficulties often exhibit characteristics (e.g. gesturing, frustration, and innovative communication strategies) which give assessors important clues to the presence of a communicative disorder. We may want to observe how well the child communicates with English-speaking and Chinese-speaking peers and adults. Our observations may also include comparative studies. For example, you may have two Chinese-speaking children of similar ages. While children show individual differences in performance, you may gain insights about a particular child's communicative functioning in natural situations. The language disordered child might show limited ability to auditorily attend for long periods of time.

Developmental History

This provides us with information about the child's overall development in different areas from birth. Most of this information may be obtained through a combination of parent interview and school reports or evaluations which may have been performed.

If parents are Chinese-speaking, we may need to provide interpreter services. Since cultural considerations enter into the interviewing process, assessors would do well to become familiar with techniques that ensure parents understand the nature of the interview and the questions being asked. (Refer to Culture Module 1.)

Medical/Health History

Medical and health histories form an important part of the total picture of the child. Although medical histories tend to be more extensive with children with known disabilities such as Down's Syndrome, information regarding prenatal and neonatal history is important to obtain for all children. Language disabilities affect a higher percentage of children, for example, who presented difficulties such as low birth weight and hypocalcemia at birth. It may be difficult for assessors to obtain medical histories performed in other countries. In these cases, parent interviews may be required. In fact, parents may refer to early developmental difficulties as health-related problems. Assessors may want to discuss whether these health-related problems made it difficult for the child to walk and talk.

Family History

Family history, usually obtained through medical records and parent interview, may provide assessors information concerning related congenital problems in other family members. Cultural considerations certainly enter into such discussions. Parents, and especially older generation Chinese family members, may be sensitive to revealing details that may not reflect well on the family lineage. Assessors, then, may want to avoid the use of specific disabilities (such as mental retardation) initially and discuss health-related problems present in other family members. Questions which ask to compare sibling development may be useful, although some parents may see significant differences among siblings as normal.

Educational History

Children from other countries may have been exposed to different educational systems, approaches, and achievement objectives. For example, children may begin school at age seven and may continue through grade nine. Assessors may also see children from more rural communities who have not attended school. If the child is more severely disabled, it may well be that the child has not been involved in a program. Many countries do not offer publicly-funded special services or programs.

If the child has been enrolled in an educational program, assessors will want to gather information about the program itself. This may give you an understanding of parental values toward the child's educational difficulties or disability. For people in mainland China, hearing-impaired children tend to be mainstreamed in the regular classroom and are given additional instruction in lip-reading and articulatory phonetics. Children with profound hearing losses may have attended special programs with an emphasis on the "oral tradition," that is, one which requires the child to learn to lip-read and speak, as opposed to using sign language. Assessors of hearing impaired children should keep in mind that sign language in other countries differs significantly from American Sign Language; consequently, ASL would be equivalent to a foreign language.

Chinese Language Characteristics

The following materials have been prepared for those who wish further information on Chinese language characteristics. Trainers may present the materials in a workshop format, or may select specific sections to integrate into other areas of the module.

The purpose of this section is to clarify myths and facts about the Chinese language and increase the understanding of differences between Chinese and English language systems.

Contents of this appendix include:

Workshop Activity: Myths and Facts about Chinese 136

Differences between Chinese and English Language Systems 140

Differences in Language Use 149

Workshop Activity: Myths and Facts About Chinese

[TRAINER NOTES]: To facilitate discussion on general aspects of the *Chinese* language, have audience participate in a "Myth-Fact" game. This should be done as a self-assessed activity.

Myth or Fact?

____T ____F The main dialect spoken in China is Chinese, with Mandarin being the second most common dialect.

____T ____F Chinese dialects differ largely in accent, much like our differences between a Southern drawl and a Western twang.

____T ____F In Mandarin, "ma" can have four different meanings depending on what pitch the word carries.

____T ____F It is difficult for a Chinese person to become accent-free in speaking English /r/ and /l/ because Chinese people tend to have a broader tongue and smaller oral cavity.

____T ____F Chinese verbs are not inflected for past tense.

____T ____F Young Chinese children tend to learn Chinese more quickly than children learning English as a first language because it is a simpler language in form.

____T ____F You can express a whole phrase in Chinese by a single word.

____T ____F The speech of Chinese children tends to be "sing-song" in quality because of cultural traditions to express peace and contentment in conversing respectfully with elders.

____T ____F Chinese and Japanese are related languages.

[TRAINER SCRIPT]:

1. The main dialect spoken in China is Chinese, with Mandarin being the second most common dialect.

   False. There is no single language "Chinese." Mandarin or "putonghua" (common speech), along with its regional subdialects is the main dialect of mainland China. Cantonese is another important dialect in China. Because many immigrants have come from Hong Kong, Cantonese is more frequently heard in California Chinese communities.

2. Chinese dialects differ largely in accent, much like our differences between a Southern drawl and a Western twang.

   False. Chinese dialects are not simply a matter of accent differences. Chinese has many dialects and regional subdialects. Two major dialect groups are Mandarin and Cantonese. While many Chinese people know two or more dialects, a Mandarin speaker does not necessarily understand a Cantonese speaker. There are phonological, tonal, and grammatical differences between the two dialects.

3. In Mandarin, "ma" can have four different meanings, depending on what pitch the word carries.

   True It is true that "ma" can have different meanings: "mom," "horse," "hemp," and "scold." These meaning differences are distinguished by pitch differences called "tones." Mandarin has four tones, and almost every syllable in Chinese has some tone assigned to it. Cantonese, by the way, has ten tones.

4. It is difficult for a Chinese person to become accent-free in speaking English /r/ and /l/ because Chinese people tend to have a broader tongue and a smaller oral cavity.

   False. It is false that Chinese people as a group have broader tongues and smaller oral cavities (although, comparatively, some Chinese people have higher palates and smaller chins). Pronunciation difficulties, however, have no basis in differences in racial features.

   The sounds /r/ and /l/ may be difficult to pronounce because of differences in the sound systems between English and Chinese. Chinese has retroflex sounds similar to /r/ and /l/, but they are different from English /r/ and /l/. By the same token, a speaker of English generally has a difficult time producing Chinese retroflex sounds precisely.

5. Chinese verbs are not inflected for past tense.

   True It is true that Chinese does not inflect its verbs to express past tense, Chinese does not add on regular suffixes such as "-ed" to express the past tense "walked." This does not mean, however, that Chinese has no way to express past tense. Other markings within the sentence as well as the context of discourse clearly establishes time reference, including indicators as to whether the action is continuous ("I walk to school"), present and ongoing, ("I am walking to school"), etc.

6. Young Chinese children tend to learn Chinese more quickly than children learning English as their first language because it is a simpler language in form.

   False. Chinese is not easier nor is it harder to learn than English as a first language. Adult speakers of English, however, frequently find it extremely difficult to learn Chinese because it bears little resemblance to English structure and syntax. Oftentimes we adopt ethnocentric attitudes that our own native language is the norm by which others are judged; e.g. some languages are simpler than English, others are harder. For the child learning a first language, the easiest language to learn is that of the parents.

7. You can express a whole phrase in Chinese by a single word.

   False. At least, you cannot express much more in a single word in Chinese than you can in a single English word. Some of the "mysteries of the Orient" — and with it, the myths of the Chinese language — possibly relate to stereotypical expressions commonly thought to represent Chinese philosophy, e.g. fortune cookie wisdom, and "a picture is worth a thousand words." Of course, in any language we can *read* in meanings into short expressions such as "Wow!" "maybe," or "we'll see."

8. The speech of Chinese children tends to be "sing-song" in quality because of cultural traditions to express peace and contentment in conversing respectfully with elders.

   False. Non-speakers of Chinese may perceive Chinese as "sing-song." But this quality has nothing to do with Chinese personalities or traditions. Chinese has tones or pitch differences over almost every syllable. These tones are an obligatory feature of Chinese language pronunciation. Tones should not be confused with dramatic expressions (e.g. speaking with emphasis). It is true, however, that children brought up in traditional Chinese homes are given much instruction in speaking respectfully to elders.

9. Chinese and Japanese are related languages.

   False. Chinese and Japanese languages are not related in the way Spanish and Portuguese are related within the same Indo-European language family. Japanese borrowed many Chinese characters, but other aspects of the writing system are different. A Chinese speaker would not understand a Japanese speaker (unless of course, the Chinese speaker was bilingual).

Differences Between Chinese and English Language Systems

Dialects

Because Chinese dialects are diverse among recent immigrants to the United States, assessors will want to discern the dialect(s) the child speaks. In selecting an appropriate interpreter in the assessment or interview process, assessors need to consider which dialect and *culture* most closely approximates that of the child and parents. A child from Taiwan will probably speak a distinct dialect from a child from Hong Kong or from the mainland (People's Republic of China). Similarly, a child from a low-income household in Taiwan may speak a different dialect from a child raised in a middle-class environment.

In contrast to American English dialects heard in the United States, the major dialect groups of China are mutually unintelligible. The differences among dialects is more broad than, for example, the differences among Midwestern and Southern accents in the United States. Thus, if the child you are assessing is Cantonese speaking, a Chinese interpreter who speaks only Mandarin would not be adequate.

Dialects in Mainland China

The Chinese language as a whole, including all dialects and regional sub-dialects, is referred to by the Chinese as "Zhongwen," although this applies to the written as opposed to the spoken language. Ninety-four percent of the mainland population are said to speak "Hanyu" or the Han language. Within this category, there are two major sub-categories:

- Putonghua: the standard language, or common language, known
- All others, which are referred to as "dialects," or fang yan.

Putonghua includes the pronunciation of the general Beijing dialect, the grammar of Northern Chinese dialects (Mandarin), and the vocabulary of modern Chinese literature. The largest number of people speak northern dialects, which as a whole are referred to as Mandarin. Geographically, Mandarin is heard in the north, northwest, west and southwest.

In the East, Wu dialects are spoken, and include Shanghai dialects. In the southeast are the most widely differentiated dialects: Cantonese, Min, and Hakka, among others.

It is not unusual for Chinese families from the People's Republic of China to speak several dialects within the family. Families may have moved from one province to another, or families may represent inter-marriages of a Cantonese-speaking father to a Shanghai-speaking mother, for example.

Furthermore, with the endorsement of Putonghua as the official language of China, many families know some degree of Mandarin.

Chinese Dialects from Other Asian Countries

By far, the greater number of Chinese immigrants in recent years have been from Cantonese-speaking provinces or countries. In San Francisco, for example, Cantonese is much more commonly heard than Mandarin. Until recently, many immigrants have come to the States via Hong Kong where Cantonese is the common Chinese dialect spoken by residents there.

The second most common dialect heard among immigrants in the Bay Area (and perhaps other areas in California) is Toishanese, a Cantonese-related dialect from the Taishan province in the People's Republic of China.

Children from Taiwan may speak one or more of several common dialects: Tai-yu, or what is often referred to in the States as "Fukienese," and Mandarin, usually more common among middle-class families.

Vietnamese children may represent a variety of both dialects and languages. Vietnamese, while not a Chinese dialect but a language of its own, is spoken by many immigrants from Vietnam. Many Vietnamese families, however, may have originally come from Chinese provinces and settled in Chinese communities in Vietnam. Common Chinese dialects spoken by Chinese-Vietnamese families include Cantonese and Dzheou chou (a Chinese province in Vietnam).

Similarly, many Chinese families from other Asian countries, such as Singapore, may have originally come from provinces in China. Common dialects heard among Chinese immigrants from Singapore include Cantonese and Fukienese.

Among Cambodian and Laotian children, languages of those countries are more typically heard, as opposed to Chinese. That is, it is more likely that a Cambodian child is Cambodian-speaking; a Laotian more likely speaks a Laotian dialect, the more common ones being Lau (among the lowland people) and Hmong.

Considerations in Selecting Chinese Interpreters

As we can see, dialects may vary considerably among Chinese children that you see. They will also vary among interpreters available to you. One point to bear in mind is the difficulty in finding precise matches between interpreters and a child from smaller provinces in Asian countries. Also, many Chinese speakers may acknowledge that they speak "Putonghua," although their version of Putonghua may be colored by their own regional accent.

It may be difficult, then, for a Chinese interpreter to assist with an articulatory inventory if the interpreter speaks Putonghua with a Shanghai accent, while the child speaks Putonghua in the officially recognized Beijing accent. Both will understand one another well enough; however, pronunciation patterns will differ and this should be taken into account when using interpreters for speech evaluations.

A Word About Chinese Written Systems

While the focus of this module is on spoken forms of language and language use, some points about written Chinese may assist educators in selecting assessment procedures in language areas.

First, in addition to written Chinese characters, a phonetic form of writing, pinyin, has recently been emphasized in the People's Republic of China (PRC). Pinyin is phonetically based and is similar in many ways to the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). For example, "sell" in pinyin is written mai, which in IPA appears as [mai]. Speech clinicians who are familiar with IPA may be able to use pinyin as an approach to gathering information on speech patterns. This assumes, of course, that the child has received training in pinyin in school. Generally, only school age children from mainland China will be familiar with pinyin.

The emphasis on teaching pinyin in schools has been to encourage a standardization of Putonghua as the official language of the PRC. Pinyin is the first writing system taught, beginning at about age seven.

Comparative Domains of Chinese and English

Within the time we have to discuss language characteristics, it is not possible to give you a complete analysis of Chinese. Part of this difficulty stems from what we have already discussed; that is, the multiplicity of dialects. For our purposes, however, we will examine some common language characteristics of Chinese, with examples using Mandarin and Cantonese. Examples in Mandarin will be based on the Putonghua and examples in Cantonese will be similar to the dialect spoken in Canton City.

Phonological Comparisons

Syllable Structures

In Chinese, a syllable is comprised of three elements:

- An initial consonant (which is optional)
- A final sound or rhyme, and
- A tone

English does not have obligatory tones over syllable segments (although pitch differences occur in English and signal different sentence types, e.g. statements vs. questions).

Initial sounds include aspirated stops (e.g. p', t', k'), unaspirated stops (e.g. p, t, k), nasals (e.g. m, n), fricatives (e.g. f, h, s), continuants (e.g. l, h), and semi-vowels (y, w).

For the speech and language clinician, we have included a chart of initial sounds for both Mandarin and Cantonese. For Cantonese, sounds have been transcribed in IPA and common form of American romanization known as the Yale method. For Mandarin, sounds are transcribed in IPA and as it is written in pinyin.

Cantonese Initial Sounds

IPA	Yale Transcription
p' (aspirated)	p
p (unaspirated)	b
t'	t
t	d
k'	k
k	g
t'	ch
t (unaspirated)	j
k'w	kw
kw	gw
m	m
n	n
n	ng
f	f
l	l
h	h
s	s
j	y
w	w

Initial Mandarin Sounds

IPA	Pinyin
p' (aspirated)	p
p (unaspirated)	b
t'	t
t	d
k'	k
k	g
t	ch
t (retroflexed)	zh
c (pre-palatal fricative	x
c (pre-palatal)	z
c'	c
s	s
k'w	kw
kw	gw
m	m
n	n
f	f
l	l
r (retroflex)	r
h	h
x	h
jw	y
w	w

Tones

As we have already mentioned briefly, Chinese syllables are distinguished from one another not only by the different combinations of consonants and vowels but also by the pitch of the voice by *tones.*

Tones are an intrinsic part of the phonological shape of a syllable and carry information that gives meaning to syllables as morphemes or words. Tones do not refer to individual speaker expression and have nothing to do with the "mood" or personality of the speaker. Tones are also distinguished from intonation or stress patterns.

English, for example, has variations in pitch and loudness using many of the same vocal dynamics that are involved in tones. In English, however, pitch and loudness serve different functions:

- To assign stress over syllables in words (e.g. "tomato" is stressed in the second syllable; "duplicate" receives primary stress in the first syllable)

- To carry grammatic information over sentences or phrases (e.g. contrast the differences in intonation for statements and questions)

- To supply additional semantic and pragmatic information within a sentence or grammatic form (e.g. contrast the difference in meanings when stress is given to particular words in a sentence as in "*Jerry* sold me the car" vs. "Jerry sold me the *car*").

In Chinese tones are strictly assigned to each syllable which corresponds roughly the morpheme (or individual unit of meaning). Take the Cantonese example of a syllable such as *mai* which can carry different meanings, if produced with different tones ('buy' vs. 'sell,' for example). *(The Trainer may demonstrate this vocally if experienced with tonal differences in Cantonese.)* With respect to just the initial and final sounds within the syllable, *mai* might appear to be homophonous. Tones, however, are an inseparable part of the production of this syllable as a word.

Cantonese has ten tones, which are as follows:

high level
high falling
middle rising
middle level
low falling
low rising
low level
high clipped
middle clipped
low clipped

[TRAINER NOTE]: You may wish to demonstrate the above tones if you are fluent in Cantonese.

Mandarin has four tones:

First tone:	level tone, e.g. ma This is produced with a high level pitch. In pinyin, this is represented as ma which means "mother."
Second tone:	rising tone, e.g. ma The voice rises sharply and crisply from a low pitch to end on a high pitch as though asking a question "ma?" In pinyin, this is represented as ma which means "hemp."
Third tone:	low dipping, e.g. ma The voice starts at a lower pitch, dips slightly and rises slightly at the end. The syllable is drawn out. In pinyin, this is represented as ma which means "horse."
Fourth tone:	falling tone, e.g. ma The voice starts at a higher pitch and falls rapidly from high to low. In pinyin, this is represented as ,ma which means "scold."

It should be noted that there are more than four possible meanings of the word "ma" in Mandarin. There are four possible pronunciations of "ma" because of the tonal aspect of the words. There are, however, multiple meanings of words that have the same sounds and same tones, i.e. homonyms.

Morphology and Syntax

Morphology and syntax are terms that are used in describing aspects of language. A morpheme is an individual unit of meaning. It refers not only to individual words, but those parts of words that carry information. Syntax refers to the relationship among words in phrases and sentences and the processes that form those relationships.

Since both systems interact with one another, we will discuss these domains together.

Plurals

As one clear example, English and Chinese differ in how number (plurality) is expressed. For example, in English, a word such as "boys" contains two morphemes:

1. The morpheme "boy" which is a referent for persons who are young males.
2. The plural morpheme which in this case is orthographically represented as /-s/ and phonologically represented as /-z/.

[TRAINER NOTE]: You may wish to review morphological concepts in greater detail with those somewhat familiar with linguistics.

Some linguists have characterized English morphology as "synthetic" and Chinese morphology as "analytic." That is, English can more freely combine morphemes within the same lexical categories. For example, English has a number of morpheme markers, such as the plural suffix in which the basic rule allows speakers to attach some phonological variant of /-z/ to the end of nouns. Thus, with almost any noun, you can form a plural form of that noun. There are, of course, exceptions to the rule, but the basics of the rule applies broadly.

Chinese is seen as more "analytic" or "isolating" because the forms of its words are much less subject to variation than are words in English. For example, Cantonese does not form plurals by attaching an ending to nouns, as in English. Rather, the plural meaning is understood through the presence of modifying numerals or adjectives with such meanings as "several" or "many."

Tense

Chinese also expresses time differently from English. In English, we inflect for tense within the verb. Cantonese has a particle, "jo" which signifies completed actions. Thus in Cantonese the meaning equivalent of "I already ate" is expressed as:

> Ngo yijing sik jo
> "I" "already" "eat" completion-marker

Unlike the English past tense suffix "-ed," the marker does not necessarily attach to the verb, but more generally is expressed at the end of the phrase. Chinese can express, for example, "I already ate dinner" by placing the marker "jo" at the end following the noun object "fan." (The particle cannot, however, stand by itself, that is, someone could not grammatically respond "jo" to mean "I did.")

Ngo yijing sik jo fan
"I" "already" "eat" "dinner" completion marker

Notice that this completion "tense" appears almost as though it is a "free" morpheme, unbound from the verb. Although "jo" is not attached to the verb as with bound suffixes in English, it cannot stand by itself. To wit, someone could not grammatically respond "jo" to mean "I did."

Past or completed tense is not always expressed with the addition of "jo" as a sentential marker. For example, other referents in the sentence supply time distinctions. Cantonese expresses "I was at school yesterday" as follows:

Ngo kamyat hai hokhau
"I" "yesterday" "at" "school"

As we can see, Chinese does not inflect for past tense. The referent "yesterday" suffices to establish the time element. Notice also that adverbial expressions generally occur more strictly at the beginning of the phrase, often immediately before or after the subject.

Question formation

To provide you with a better understanding of other syntactic differences, let's also consider question formation in Chinese and English. In English, question formation generally involves syntactic rearrangement of the verb and noun. Thus, the statement "He is tall" expressed as a question takes on the following transposition: "Is he tall?" Choice-type questions in Chinese are formed by coupling the positive and negative form of the verb, optionally followed by a question particle. Example:

Mandarin:	Ta gao bugao
Cantonese:	Keiuh gou mgou a
	"He" "tall" "not-tall" particle

Summary

As we have seen by these examples, Chinese and English are quite different in their syntactic and morphological organization. We have given you a small sampling of characteristics in the Chinese language.

To sum up the larger scope of differences, there are some generalizations to bear in mind.

First, Chinese is a more "analytic," or "isolating," language in comparison to English; that is, the forms of Chinese words are much less subject to variation through inflection (i.e., the addition of morphological markers such as possessives, plurals, tense, etc.)

Secondly, Chinese uses many particles that do not necessarily attach to the verb, but nonetheless are governed by specific grammatical and selectional rules. We saw examples of this in the formation of question structures. English, on the other hand, relies more on syntactic transpositions of subjects and verbs.

Thirdly, while English word order is subject-verb-object (SVO), Chinese has both SVO and SOV orders.

In a later part of this workshop, we will look in more detail at other examples of Chinese and English differences which may contribute to errors in English language use on the part of an LEP Chinese child.

Differences in Language Use

Oftentimes, when we think of someone speaking with a "foreign accent," we refer mainly to their pronunciation of English words. Actually, there are many other subtle features of language use that a non-native speaker of English needs to master. Among those features not always taught in English language classes are intonation patterns, idiomatic expressions, and conversational rules. Because language serves for communication, we cannot ignore those aspects that can foster or hamper clear communication. Perhaps, more importantly, we need to be aware of the nature of our own language use and differences in communicating with LEP children. For example, consider how intonation, idiomatic expression, and conversational rules contribute to the real meaning in the following exchange:

John: "Can you pet this cat"?
Sandy: "Well, I can..."

First, note that American speech is frequently sprinkled with an idiomatic "you" which has replaced the use of generic "one" ("Can one pick up this cat?"). Secondly, our understanding of this use of "you" and conversational rules tells us that John is not asking Sandy if she possesses the ability to pet the cat, nor is he requesting permission. Rather, he is asking for information on the relative safety of petting the cat. Thirdly, Sandy's response with its distinctive intonation patterns should cue John that he is apt to get his hand bit off.

Thus, through this little example, we can see how important it is to consider other features of language use — often ones that are heavily culturally loaded, learned through other speakers in the same language community. It is possible then that misinterpretation on the LEP child's part may also reflect lack of knowledge of these subtle features — features that contribute heavily to perception and comprehension. Assessors need to be aware of this possibility so as not to confuse this type of misinterpretation as a more serious language deficit.

We would like you to be especially aware of features of English that may be confusing to the LEP child.

Intonation Patterns

Intonation patterns include stress and pitch patterns that differentiate statements, questions, demands, sarcasm, etc. For the listener, intonation patterns carry much in the way of grammatic information. Thus, often a listener can perceive that a question, for example, is being asked purely by the intonation used by the speaker. Similarly, we often hear very young children producing meaningless intonated jargon prior to their being able to speak the exact words that go into that structure.

As we have already discussed, question formation in Chinese differs from English. Likewise, the intonation patterns that accompany these grammatic structures may differ. As we discussed in our "myth-fact" section, LEP children may be perceived as having a "sing-song" intonation which may actually be a carry over of tonal contrasts.

Idiomatic and Slang Expressions

Idiomatic and slang expressions include fixed expressions with particularized meanings which are often culturally loaded. Idioms do not translate precisely and, oftentimes, not at all. Assessors need to be aware of expressions that are particular to American language use that may be difficult for non-native speakers to comprehend. Many idiomatic expressions have a fixed word order and meanings which cannot be derived from the individual words comprising the expression. Consider the following common expressions:

- Wear and tear
- Day in and day out
- Out of sight, out of mind
- Ripped off
- Kick the bucket
- It's a breeze
- Get a kick out of (dancing)
- Hot and heavy
- Flying by the seat of your pants
- Shooting from the hip
- Live it up.

Non-native speakers may inadvertently combine expressions or invert them, e.g. tear and wear, shooting from the seat of your pants, or kicked his bucket. Translations of idioms may also result in combinations that are not equivalent to the original meaning. For example, a soft drink advertisement appeared a few years ago in mainland China. The original headline used in the American version of the advertisement was "Pepsi makes you come alive!" The Chinese translation of that idiom was the equivalent of "Pepsi raises your ancestors from the dead."

[TRAINER NOTE]: Ask participants to contribute examples of idiomatic expressions that non-native speakers of English may have difficulties with. Unless speakers have had experience with these exact phrases, they may have difficulties comprehending their meanings.

In addition to phrases, English is filled with individual slang expressions. As we know, slang is especially common among teenagers, and seems to serve a sociological function of defining group inclusiveness. Many slang words have come into use through shortening. For example, we may say "flip on the stereo" which is a shortened version of "flip on the switch that turns on the stereo." (For that matter, many stereos these days have pushbutton devices in place of switches that require a flipping action.) Furthermore, we also have uses of "flip" that connote quite different meanings, e.g. "flipped out" and "flip-flop."

Assessors need to be aware of the degree and type of idiomatic expressions used in their own speech, as well as the speech of the child's peers. Differences in slang and idiomatic expressions are even manifest in the speech between an American and British citizen. Often native speakers of English are not aware of the degree to which slang and idioms enter into daily conversational use. By the same token, LEP children may pick up slang expressions, but use them inappropriately. Taboo words, for example, are highly culturally defined. LEP children may hear vulgar expressions used frequently but not understand the restrictions of using them in daily speech.

Conversational Rules

Conversational rules include unspoken rules of conversation and discourse that "define" communication contexts. While all languages have such rules, they are often particular to each culture. We are not necessarily conscious of these rules, but we respond to them nonetheless.

We have, for example, "politeness rules" in which we use questions to make requests. At the dinner table, then we may say, "Can you pass the butter?" In this context, the listener knows that this question is not in the same vein as being asked, "Can you play the piano?" in which we are questioning actual ability. The appropriate response on the part of the listener is to hear this question as a polite request to pass the butter. Consider the following "requests" phrased as questions:

> How do you feel about driving?
> Would you mind giving me a hand with this?
> How about answering the phone for me?

While we do not mean to imply that LEP children will always respond inappropriately to these questions, we want to emphasize the relation of social and cultural context in defining meanings. The LEP child may not understand the intent of our requests masked as questions, or may hesitate to respond negatively to questions, even those with honest information-gathering intentions, e.g. "How do you feel about being in this classroom?"

Comparing English and Chinese Sound Systems

The following materials have been prepared for those who wish further information on the Chinese speech sound system and how features compare to English. Information in this section can also be used as additional handouts for speech and language clinicians who are interested in doing Phonemic Contrastive Analysis.

Contents in this appendix include:

Phonetic Comparison 153
Distribution of Phonological Elements 153
Comparison of Phonological Systems 153
Chart: Phonological Comparisons in Chinese and English 155

Comparing English and Chinese Sound Systems

Phonetic Comparison

(As described by Dulay, et al) Children becoming bilingual learn very early to use sounds that are phonetically similar in the two languages. That is, a child whose primary language is Chinese, will use sounds in English that are phonetically similar to those in Chinese.

On the other hand, if the second language contains sounds which are not in the primary language, the child may produce such sounds by substituting phonetically-close sounds from the first language. For example, Cantonese does not have the interdental fricative sound /0/ of English. If a Cantonese-speaking child cannot produce this sound, s/he may substitute the sound /s/ of Cantonese, which is phonetically similar to /0/, differing only in point of articulation. The word "something" might, therefore, be produced as "somesing".

Distribution of Phonological Segments

One of the most significant factors that should be included in our analysis of Chinese and English is information on sound distribution. By sound or phonological distribution, we refer to where those sounds occur in words. For example, English allows consonants to occur together in clusters, or blends, within syllables, such as br-, bl-, tr-, pl-, pr-, sm-, sl-, spr-, etc. (Consonant clusters in English occur in both initial and final positions within syllables as well as medially within words of more than one syllable.) Cantonese does not allow its consonants to cluster together in this fashion, however, and thus, a Cantonese-speaking child may have difficulty in producing English blends in his/her early productions of English words.

Comparison of Phonological Systems

In addition to comparing phonetic and distribution differences, we need to look at the overall processes of each language's phonological system. In other words, "rules" of speech production in Chinese differ from "rules" of production in English.

In the dynamics of speaking, sounds may be produced in a certain manner, different from its underlying form. We may refer to these processes as "co-articulation rules". For example, consider the English word "you". In isolation, "you" is pronounced /ju/. However, oftentimes in rapid speech in which "you" is co-articulated with bordering words and sounds, it may alter and become palatalized as "joo" as in "Did joo eat?" The vowel in "you" may also change its shape, so that the phrase is produced as "Did juh eat?"

As a less dramatic example, we may also add sounds that ease articulation of joining sounds. We say "warm", for example, with /m/ being our final sounds. However, in saying "warmth", we often intrude an additional /p/ in our co-articulation of -m and -th.

We may modify a sound somewhat to "assimilate" it to a sound close to it. For example, young children often say "samwich" for "sandwich". The dental nasal /n/ has become the bilabial nasal /m/, by assimilation to the bilabial semi-vowel /w/.

Chinese has different co-articulation rules for its sound system. Thus, we may hear co-articulated sounds in words that do not have the precise shading that a native speaker of English would use.

Phonological Comparisons in Cantonese and English

To facilitate trainer review of phonological comparisons, refer to the following chart of examples:

1. Sounds that may be difficult for the Chinese child to produce in any position because of **Phonetic Differences** include:

English:	*Possible production by LEP child:*
voiceless -th	-s
voiced -th	-omission or /d
final -th	-s or -f

2. Sounds that may be difficult to produce because of differences in **Sound Distribution** include:

final -s	-omission or pre-palatal /c'/
final -z	-omission or pre-palatal /c/
final -l	-omission

In addition, Chinese LEP children may have difficulties with blends. Actual approximations will depend much upon the age of the child and the shape of the whole word. Blends include sounds such as kr-, kl-, br-, bl-, sk-, -ks, -st, -ts, -mp, etc.

3. Because Chinese has shorter polysyllabic words than English, Chinese-speaking children may have difficulty with long, polysyllabic words in English, especially with their stress patterns and consonant clusters.

Features of Second Language Acquisition

The purpose of this section is to provide an understanding of the process and issues involved in second language acquisition. To accomplish this, we will cover the following topics:

- Factors of age affecting second language acquisition
- Patterns of second language acquisition

These materials have been prepared for those who wish further information on second language learning. These materials may be presented as another part of the workshop, or provided to participants as a handout.

Contents of this appendix include:

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Workshop Activity: Case Study of Language Backgrounds 147

Age Considerations in Second Language Learning 151

First Versus Second Language Learning 154

Stages of Acquisition of Linguistic Structures 155

Consonant Sounds of Cantonese 156

Comparing Grammatical Structures of Cantonese and English 157

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Quiz : Assessing Limited English Proficient Children Who Speak Cantonese 160

Answer Sheet 161

Introduction

As assessors, we may see children who are referred to as "bilingual" who may actually represent two different sets of circumstances:

- The child may have been born in this country and learned two languages simultaneously, perhaps Chinese in the home and English among peers and later, through school.
- The child may have been born in another Chinese-speaking country, learned Chinese as a first language, and later began acquiring English as a second language through the new environment.

In addition to these two circumstances, there may be many other individual circumstances among bilingual children. What is important is to distinguish two sets of learning conditions: simultaneous acquisition of two languages, and sequential acquisition of two languages, in which one language is introduced at a later period of learning. Some refer to the former as bilingual language acquisition and the latter as second language learning.

From a practical standpoint, assessors will want to investigate background information on the child that will provide a clearer understanding of the child's language profile and needs. Information needs include:

- Age at which the child began learning a second language.
- Parent influences of first and second language learning.
- Environmental influences of first and second language learning.
- Peer influences.

Workshop Activity Case Study of Language Backgrounds

[TRAINER DIRECTIONS]: Assign participants into teams to look at example profiles of Chinese children; one profile will be assigned to one team. After participants have had a chance to review their profile, ask them what areas concerning first and second language learning they would want more information on that may assist them in understanding the child's language background. Through this activity, participants should develop a better understanding of different language learning conditions, as well as information they will need to gather for future assessment purposes.

Directions:

The following are example profiles of children who represent different ages of second language learning. We have provided you with skeletal information. Your task is to determine further information you would need in compiling a profile of this child's language background - information that could help you in your assessment process, both in deciding what assessment procedures you will use, and understanding the child's current language needs. List areas you might investigate.

[TRAINER SCRIPT]: The following are example issues and questions that might be included in your discussion of the above profiles. Our information needs may include the listed concerns and questions.

Profile 1: Ma Lay

Ma Lay is 3 years old. She and her family arrived in the United States from Hong Kong shortly before Ma Lay was born. Two months ago, Ma Lay started attending a childcare center in San Francisco's Chinatown. She's been referred for a psychological assessment because of general difficulties in adapting to the classroom and, specifically, because of her apparent lack of language use in the classroom.

- What dialect do her mother and father speak?
- Does Ma Lay speak the same dialect?
- Since Hong Kong is a British colony, do parents also speak English? Have they used English with her?
- Are there other family members in the home? Siblings? Grandparents? Aunts and uncles?
- Who cared for Ma Lay in the home? Mother? Father? Siblings? Grandparents?
- What was the language and dialect of her caregiver?
- What has Ma Lay's language development in Chinese been like? Do parents perceive her Chinese acquisition as typical for a three year old?
- If there are other siblings, where does Ma Lay fall in sibling order? Youngest? Oldest? Middle?
- What language(s) is spoken in the childcare center?
- What language(s) is used by her teacher? Is it the same dialect?
- What language(s) and dialects do the children at the center speak?
- What language(s) and dialects do the children in her group speak?
- Does Ma Lay have regular playmates? What languages do they speak?
- How long is Ma Lay at the center? Where does she go after leaving the center? Who takes care of her?
- What is the language of her community before and after school?
- What has been her exposure to English? When was she first exposed to English? Does she have any daily routines that involve English language use — either listening or speaking?
- What words has she learned in English.

Answers to these questions concerning language development and use should accompany other questions about development.

Profile 2: Loy Jock

Loy Jock is 8 years old. He and his family arrived from Vietnam when Loy Jock was five years old. They settled in a suburb in the Los Angeles area. At that time, Loy Jock was enrolled in kindergarten. Currently, he's in the third grade and is doing poorly in most areas, particularly language areas.

- What dialect does Loy Jock speak? Which dialect(s) was he exposed to?
- What language(s) and dialect(s) do his parents speak?
- Who took care of Loy Jock as a young child? What was the language and dialect of the caregiver?
- Are there other members of the family living with them? Grandparents? Siblings? What languages do they speak among themselves and to Loy Jock?
- At what age was Loy Jock exposed to English? Prior to coming to this country? When he started school?
- What is the language of the community in which he and his parents live?
- What language(s) are spoken at school?
- What language is spoken among peers?
- What language is spoken after school?
- Do parents feel Loy Jock's Chinese language use is typical of a child his age?
- What language skills does he have in Chinese?
- What language skills does he have in English?
- If there are delays in both languages, do they seem to be equally delayed? In both receptive and expressive language areas?

Profile 3: Su Mei

Su Mei is 15 years old. She and her family arrived in the United States from the People's Republic of China a year ago. They are now living in Fresno where relatives of the family live. Initially, Su Mei was enrolled in a regular high school classroom for most academic subjects and is receiving ESL support services as well, primarily for oral language instruction. She is being assessed to determine her educational and ESL needs for the next school year.

- What dialect do parents speak among themselves?
- What dialect do they speak to Su Mei?
- Are there siblings? Grandparents living in the home? Other relatives?
- What was the language of the community in China?
- What was the language of her peers in China?
- What language was officially used in school in China?
- What language(s) and dialect(s) does Su Mei understand?
- What language(s) and dialect(s) does Su Mei speak?
- Was English taught in her school in China (English is the most frequently taught foreign language) If so, what level did she achieve in her classes in English? What was the nature of that instruction? Both oral and written?
- Was pinyin taught and used in school?
- Did she also learn to write Chinese characters?
- What language is used among school mates now?
- How is Su Mei's language skills in English affecting her performance in various subjects at school?

Age Considerations in Second Language Learning

Age at which second language begins is an important factor in predicting difficulties a child might encounter, as well as how quickly English might be acquired. We expect fewer difficulties with children who acquire two languages from birth. We might expect greater difficulties with older school age children, for whom a primary language such as Chinese is already in place.

The First Three Years

In first language acquisition, language systems are generally intact syntactically and phonologically by approximately age seven. That is, the child's speech repertoire at age seven contains most of the sound elements found in adult speech. Similarly, most adult forms of syntactic structures are acquired by age seven, at least, at an underlying level of comprehension. Vocabulary continues to increase throughout life, although generally at a pace much slower than during the first five years of life.

If second language learning takes place during the first few years of life, during what psycholinguists refer to as the "critical period for language development," the child often quickly accommodates to the new language, hence developing skills and proficiency readily. It is not unusual to hear of children who develop relative ease and proficiency within a year of first exposure to the second language.

Why is there such flexibility in acquiring additional languages at an early age? The brain at birth is developmentally ready to acquire and organize language. While we lack sufficient research on factors that affect second language acquisition, we do know that this plasticity of the brain to organize additional languages is greatest during the period of birth to approximately three or four years. Because the language system is not "fixed" — but still at the "information-gathering" stage, factors such as language interference or language confusion are less apt to occur.

Other factors combine that make second language learning a more flexible process in early childhood. During the first three years of life, children are more environmentally dependent. Language is much more powerfully linked to experiences. It is inextricably tied to new learning situations, to developing other skills. The language learning "classroom," so to speak, is a much more effective one at an early age.

Second language learning in early childhood, however, assumes that the child will have an abundance of learning opportunities in both languages. Prior to school age, language experiences tend to be more linked to the family. Young children, however, might be exposed to English through childcare situations, either through an English-speaking caregiver in the home, or through outside childcare. You may also encounter children of English- speaking parents, whose children are being cared for by an older Chinese-speaking relative, e.g. a grandmother. These children then, may initially learn English through their parents, and then begin learning Chinese through their caregivers.

We should bear in mind, however, that the research on second language learning at any age is not complete. Generalizations about relative ease of acquisition, then, cannot be taken as the rule for all children. Some studies have shown, for example, that children who are introduced to a second language at an early age develop language confusion and delay. Others suggest that there is a temporary delay in vocabulary acquisition, but that children quickly overcome this vocabulary hump once internal language systems become organized. Finally, another research study (as cited by Menyuk, 1971), suggests that children who become bilingual at an early age develop certain cognitive advantages over monolingual children. Children in this particular study performed as well on verbal tasks as monolingual children, and better on symbol manipulation.

In these studies, as with the children we actually see, factors of experience play an important role in the effect of second language learning.

Later Acquisition

We need to consider other factors when second language learning takes place later in life. As most of us have probably experienced, it is still much easier for a child to acquire a "foreign" language than it is for an adult. There are several reasons for this phenomenon. First, adults are generally exposed to different language learning conditions. For most of us, learning a new language would take place in the artificial confines of a classroom. We find that we learn the language somewhat faster when we are in a situation that requires that we use it. Secondly, as adults, our brains have matured and do not possess the same flexibility we have as young children. By most research accounts, the brain matures slowly from birth, reaching its maturation peak at adolescence, generally at age 12 or 13.

Prior to this, the functions of brain hemispheres and language areas of the brain are not permanently encoded. We find, for example, that children who suffer brain lesions to language areas — that is, who become aphasic — stand a much higher chance for full recovery of their language systems if the lesions occurred prior to puberty. Other portions of the brain are capable of taking over functions that the damaged portion of the brain can no longer handle. Similarly, with second language learning, the brain prior to puberty is much more receptive to handling and organizing functions.

Older children are also exposed to different linguistic, social, and educational expectations. For example, school age children are required to use their language skills to acquire reading and writing skills. We are still awaiting completion of research (UC Berkeley, School of Education, Bilingual Project) on how bilingual Chinese children perform in academic areas, based on interaction of their primary and second language skills.

Once children reach puberty, second language learning theoretically becomes more difficult. From a practical viewpoint however, other socio-affective factors may intervene that can either facilitate or hamper the process of learning English. Newly immigrated children are often under new social pressures to fit in. The child quickly discerns which language is the "prestige" form — the one used by peers. Studies have shown that the first dialect that immigrant children learn is the dialect of the child's peers.

Loss of communication facility may affect older children differently. More extroverted children tend to monitor their speech less — that is, their error-filled speech tends to be more freely used. The language of the socially reticent child, as well as the older child, tends to be filled with more hesitations or self- editing. We can well imagine the consequences to self-image that loss of language facility might have on a child.

First Versus Second Language Acquisition

Many of us are familiar with sequences of development in first language acquisition. We know for example, that children learn simple subject pronouns before they learn reflexive forms in English. Unfortunately, we have little information on the acquisition of Chinese as a first language, with the exception of a few individual case studies on specific aspects of Chinese. Nonetheless, it might be interesting to look at some of the highlights.

As with children learning English as a first language, young children acquiring Chinese perform many of the same types of language errors: double-marking, misordering of elements, regularization of rules, omission of major constituents, etc. Case studies by Mary Erbaugh (UC Berkeley, Department of Linguistics), on Mandarin-speaking children have shown that increases in mean length of utterance (average morphological segments in a phrase) correspond roughly to averages we have established for children learning English as a first language. By this, we mean that Chinese children at age two roughly speak using mean length utterances of 2.00 to 2.50 or around Brown's stage II. Erbaugh feels, in fact, that MLU for Chinese may actually be slightly underestimating the Chinese child in comparison to the English child, because of the Chinese language's extreme sparseness in morphology (e.g. lack of tense system, number and gender distinctions, and surface case markings).

In the section on stages of acquisition of linguistic structures, we looked at some typical errors produced by children learning a second language. As with first language learners, many of those errors occur at certain stages. Likewise, certain linguistic structures appear in orderly stages.

We will refer to the chart given below (from Dulay, Hernandez- Chavez, and Burt, 1978). Language features in group 1 are generally learned before those in group 2, and so forth. As with first language acquisition, these stages are hierarchical; a child who has structures at a group 4 level is presumed to have the structures in the previous stages/groups.

Stages of Acquisition of Linguistic Structures

GROUP I

Case - nominative and accusative case in simple pronoun subjects and objects, excluding coordinate pronouns in phrases such as "he and I".

Word Order - the order of constituents in simple and compound declarative sentences.

GROUP II

Singular Copula ('s/is) - the third person singular

Singular Auxiliary ('s/is) - singular and plural of BE

Plural Auxiliary (are)

Progressive (-ing)

GROUP III

Past Irregular (e.g. ate, took, came, etc.)

Conditional Auxiliary (would)

Possessive ('s)

Long Plural (-es) - as in dresses, houses

GROUP IV

Perfect Auxiliary - (have) as in have eaten

Past Participle - (en) as in eaten

Consonant Sounds of Cantonese

P	Pei (skin)
B	Ba (ball)
T	Ta (him, her, it)
D	Dai (younger brother)
K	Kam (*piano)
G	Gau (dog)
CH	Chut (out)
J	Dzan (real) Dze (pig, pearl)
KW	Kwa (brag)
GW	Gwai(expensive)
H	Hai (yes, it is)
M	Mo (nothing)
N	Neng (peace, quiet)
NG	Ngao (cow)
F	Fei (fat, greasy)
L	Lai (come here)
S	Sao (thin)
Y	Yai (Naughty) Yao (right)
W	Wai (great man)

Cantonese is a monosyllabic language. Each word consists of an initial consonant, a vowel, a final consonant and a tone; or an initial consonant, vowel or diphthong and a tone.

Final sounds are often not sounded although the articulators are put in position to make those sounds

These sounds do not exist in Cantonese:

R, TH (voiced and unvoiced), SH, Z, V, blends and consonant clusters.

Implications for testing: What can we predict normal Chinese speakers will have difficulty with in English?

Comparing Grammatical Construction of Cantonese and English

The Rule in English	The Rule in Cantonese
TENSES	
English uses ending markers to indicated tenses; e.g. walking, walked.	In Cantonese the uninflected verb is used with a past word, future word, or a marker for completed action to indicate tense. English equivalent: I yesterday go. I tomorrow go. I already eat + marker for completed action.
For certain tenses and for irregular verbs, changes occur in the structure of the verb as well as the ending. e.g.; is — eat was — ate were — have eaten	Cantonese does not use *be* auxiliaries.
PLURALS	
Regular plural is accomplished by adding-s (cats, trees, birds) or -es dresses).	In Cantonese, plural is accomplished through the number of objects, a marker for the category and the object with no plural ending. 7 + piece + paper 2 + marker for writing instruments + pencil
Irregular plural includes a structural change in the noun as well. e.g. mouse-mice goose-geese foot-feet	

ARTICLES, DEMONSTRATIVES

English uses several kinds of articles and demonstratives including a, the, this those, etc.

Cantonese relies on fewer articles; this, that, and one replace the English a and the:

this boy, that book, one car

PREPOSITIONS-LOCATION

English has many equivalent prepositions with minor changes in meaning to indicate location and direction:

on, above, over, below, under, down, high, tall, middle, next to

Cantonese makes use of fewer and simpler location words:

up
down
tall

PRONOUNS

English utilizes subject and object pronouns for each person and for number:

I, me, you, we, us, he, she, it, her, him, them

Cantonese has one word for he, she and it; I plus plural marker becomes we, you plus plural marker becomes you (pl.)

TRANSFORMATIONS

Negatives - English uses the obligatory do in addition to the word not to form negative constructions:

We don't want it.
He didn't do it.

Cantonese utilizes no and not in negative constructions.

Questions - English inverts the word order in interrogatives;

Is it raining?
Was he sleeping?

Inflection rises at the end to indicate a question. In wh-questions, word order is inverted and the wh word is used as well as obligatory do:

Where do you live?
What is making that noise?
How can it be?
When is your birthday?
Why is she crying?

There is no inversion of word order or rising inflection at the end of Cantonese questions.

Two types of questions exist that do not require *wh* words:

Those requiring a yes-no answer.
"He tall - not tall" + particle.

Those requiring verification
"It raining - right?"

INTONATION

In English intonation signals meaning; e.g.

Q. Can you pet the cat?
A. Well, I can (but nobody else can).
A. Well, I can (but I'd rather not).

Cantonese does not make use of intonation for meaning. Tones exist in Cantonese but they are actual parts of the word and have phonemic significance. Tone change changes the meaning of individual words.

What Are the Implications For?

- Predicting errors Chinese speakers may make in English that are part of a normal acquisition process?
- Assessment of Cantonese syntax the way English syntax is assessed?

Cantonese Tones

According to the Yale Romanization System

1) High level	si	poem
2) High falling	si	to think
3) High rising	si	history
4) Mid level	si	to try
5) Low falling	sih	time
6) Low rising	sih	city
7) Low level	sih	event

Knowledge Level Quiz

Assessing Limited English Proficient Children Who Speak Cantonese

1. The two most common dialects spoken by Chinese immigrants in the U.S. are ____________________ and ________________________.

2. Name two sounds Cantonese and English have in common:
____________________ and ________________________.

3. Name two sounds in English that do not exist in Cantonese and are therefore hard for Cantonese speakers to produce:
____________________ and ________________________.

4. Name two grammatical categories or kinds of grammatical constructions in English that are simple or different in Cantonese and therefore hard for Cantonese speakers of English to learn:
____________________ and ____________________.

5. True or False: Children from different foreign language backgrounds produce similar kinds of errors in learning English grammar.

6. True or False: It is appropriate to translate a test such as the PPVT into Cantonese and report the scores.

7. Name two informal assessment strategies:
____.
____.

8. Name two kinds of assessments* you can do even though you do not speak Cantonese: (Interpreters can be used to give directions)
________________________ and ____________________.

9. Should you expect a child who has been in the U.S. 2 years and speaks some English to perform well on abstract language tests such as the ITPA? ____________________.

10. When might you expect full abstract cognitive language abilities (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency Skills) to develop in a foreign language - limited English proficient speaker? Circle one:

2-3 years 5-7 years 8-10 years

* for Speech and Language

Knowledge Level Quiz

Assessing Limited English Proficient Children Who Speak Cantonese

1. The two most common dialects spoken by Chinese immigrants in the U.S. are Cantonese and Mandarin.

2. Name two sounds Cantonese and English have in common:
p and t (k, f, s, h, l, m, n, w, y).

3. Name two sounds in English that do not exist in Cantonese and are therefore hard for Cantonese speakers to produce:
th and r (v, z, blends).

4. Name two grammatical categories or kinds of grammatical constructions in English that are simple or different in Cantonese and therefore hard for Cantonese speakers of English to learn:
plurals and tenses.

5. [✓ True] or False: Children from different foreign language backgrounds produce similar kinds of errors in learning English grammar.

6. True or [✓ False]: It is appropriate to translate a test such as the PPVT into Cantonese and report the scores.

7. Name two informal assessment strategies:
observation - also classroom inventories.
language sampling - analysis of work samples.

8. Name two kinds of assessments* you can do even though you do not speak Cantonese: (Interpreters can be used to give directions)
audiological and oral motor skill.

9. Should you expect a child who has been in the U.S. 2 years and speaks some English to perform well on abstract language tests such as the ITPA? No.

10. When might you expect full abstract cognitive language abilities (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency Skills) to develop in a foreign language - limited English proficient speaker? Circle one:

2-3 years   [✓ 5-7 years]   8-10 years

* for Speech and Language

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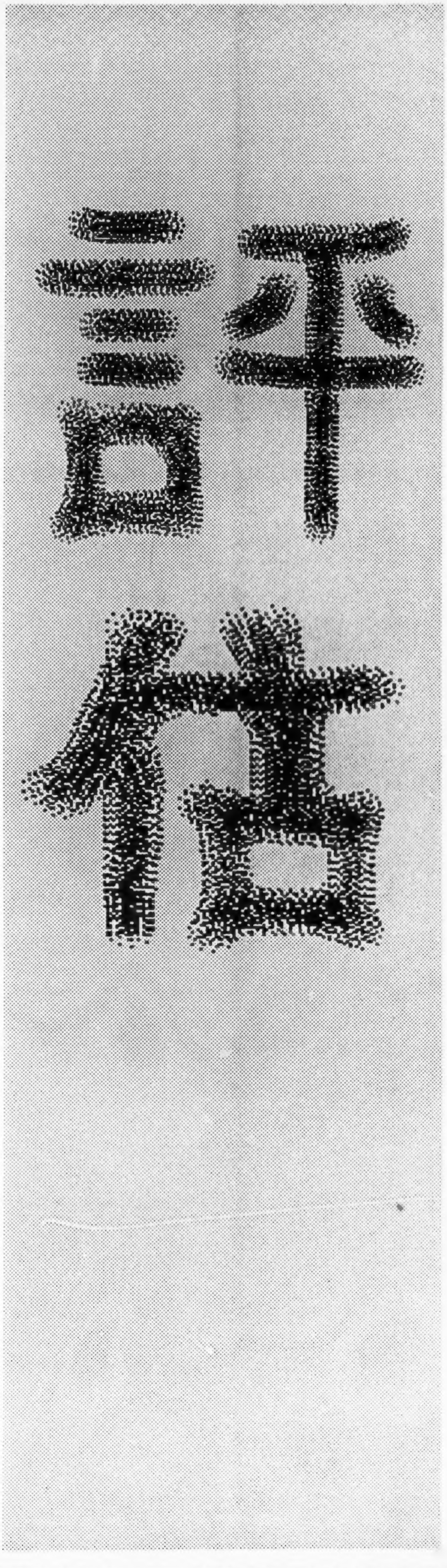
Module 3

Psychoeducation Assessment of the Limited English Proficient Chinese American Child

(Psychoeducation Module)



Psychoeducational Assessment of the LEP Chinese American Child: Introduction for Trainers

This module will look at four major issues of assessment of LEP children, with special focus on examples relating to Chinese American children. Those four areas are:

- Basic concerns in assessment of LEP children
- Selecting and modifying assessment instruments
- Observation technique and approaches
- Writing the psycho-educational report

Approach to This Training

This module assumes that participants have some experience with assessment and its components, including observation, parent interview and teacher reports. It does not assume that participants have had prior experience with LEP Chinese American children. Since this is a knowledge level training, information is aimed toward providing participants with an understanding of some of the issues. Many of the group activities have been designed to allow trainers to determine degree of participants' understanding of typical assessment and previously presented materials.

Keep in mind that this training is designed to provide a framework for understanding issues of assessment of LEP children. This training does not set out to provide definitive guidelines on assessment of Chinese children. Instead, we have taken a more practical position in assuming that most participants are not bilingual speakers of Chinese and English, and that they do not have access to instruments developed for LEP Chinese-speaking children. The approach of this training is to provide participants with a framework for understanding when and where procedures, instruments, observations, interpretations, and recommendations may need to be modified when assessing the LEP Chinese-speaking child.

We have provided this framework in four areas:

Basic concerns of assessment of LEP children

Emphasis is on understanding the major issues of assessing LEP Chinese-speaking children. Information looks at a more practical perspective rather than an idealistic one. That is, we assume that participants are not trained bilingual assessors and that they do not have access to instruments designed specifically to assess LEP Chinese-speaking children.

We begin by looking at the typical ways information is gathered for the assessment process. We then discuss what additional elements or modifications need to be made to ensure we have adequate information to make recommendations. Finally, we look at some procedures for putting together an effective multi-disciplinary team that can coordinate information on the LEP child.

Selecting and modifying assessment instruments

Emphasis in this section is on looking at how we can modify both procedures and instruments, and yet still gather useful information that helps us to understand the LEP Chinese-speaking child. This section will also consider how to select and train an interpreter/translator who can assist in all aspects of the assessment. To provide participants with a framework for modifying their own assessment instruments, we will look at some criteria for determining when assessment items may need to be modified. We will also study how modifications may affect results and our interpretation of the findings.

Approaches to observation

We will begin by reviewing why observation is an important part of assessment. Next we will consider two approaches to observation: one that observes the child within the classroom, and the other which observes the child conversing and working with an interpreter. As what we observe can have many different meanings, we will review four factors that can lead to alternative interpretations of behaviors we observe. Participants will have an opportunity to participate in a group activity that helps them apply knowledge learned in this section.

Writing the psychoeducational report

This section assumes that participants are experienced in writing the psychoeducational report. We will consider additional areas that need to be incorporated into our report, including the modification of instruments. This section will also help participants consider ways to more accurately interpret conflicting or confusing information. Finally, we will look at three factors that should be considered in formulating recommendations for the LEP Chinese American child with disabilities. To conclude this part of the training, participants will review a hypothetical case study and provide recommendations for the child's Individualized Education Plan.

Psychoeducational Assessment of the LEP Chinese American Child
Objects and Outcomes

OBJECTIVE 1:	Participants will have a framework for understanding the basic concerns surrounding assessment of LEP Chinese American children.
OUTCOME 1.1	Participants will be able to name three concerns about assessment of LEP Chinese American children.
OUTCOME 1.2	Participants will be able to name five areas of the assessment process which may require additional information in assessing the LEP child.
OUTCOME 1.3	Participants will be able to state procedures for putting together an effective multi-disciplinary team for assessing the LEP child.
OBJECTIVE 2:	Participants will have a framework for selecting and modifying assessment instruments and procedures.
OUTCOME 2.1	Participants will know three criteria to consider when selecting instruments for use with LEP Chinese-speaking children.
OUTCOME 2.2	Participants will know five criteria for selecting an interpreter/translator for assessment of LEP Chinese-speaking children.
OUTCOME 2.3	Participants will know two ways that assessment instruments can be modified and how these modifications may affect results.
OBJECTIVE 3:	Participants will have a framework for observing the LEP Chinese-speaking child as part of the assessment process.
OUTCOME 3.1	Participants will know two reasons why observation is an important part of assessment.
OUTCOME 3.2	Participants will know two approaches for collecting observation data.
OUTCOME 3.3	Participants will know four factors that can lead to alternative interpretations of the LEP Chinese-speaking child's behavior.

OBJECTIVE 4:	Participants will have a framework for writing a pychoeducational report on the LEP Chinese-speaking child.
OUTCOME 4.1	Participants will know four additional parameters to include in the psychoeducational report on a LEP Chinese-speaking child.
OUTCOME 4.2	Participants will know three approaches that can help them interpret conflicting or confusing assessment information.
OUTCOME 4.3	Participants will know three factors that should be considered when writing up recommendations for the LEP Chinese-speaking child.

Meeting Assessment Needs of Limited English Proficient Chinese American Children

OBJECTIVE 1:	Participants will have a framework for understanding the basic concerns surrounding assessment of LEP Chinese American children.
OUTCOME 1.1	Participants will be able to name three concerns about assessment of LEP Chinese American children.
OUTCOME 1.2	Participants will be able to name five areas of the assessment process which may require additional information in assessing the LEP child.
OUTCOME 1.3	Participants will be able to state procedures for putting together an effective multi-disciplinary team for assessing the LEP child.

Why is Assessment of LEP Chinese American Children a Concern?

The dangers of inappropriate assessment are threefold:

- LEP Chinese American children with special needs may not be referred for assessment:

  Example: Without the support of bilingual personnel, the resource specialist and psychologist, the teacher may find it difficult to differentiate between acculturation difficulties and learning problems in the LEP Chinese American child.

- LEP Chinese American children may be incorrectly assessed as having a handicapping condition:

  Example: A child performing poorly within the classroom and with slowly progressing communicative skills may be assessed as having a learning disorder, when the problem may actually lie in acculturation difficulties.

- The child's educational and developmental needs, strengths, and weaknesses may not be correctly identified, so that the child does not receive an educational plan that best meets their needs:

  Example: The child's educational plan may include a plan to help her overcome academic deficits, but may fail to specify a plan to help the child resolve interpersonal conflicts arising from poor achievement in his/her new environment.

Despite the over-representation of linguistic minorities in special education programs, local education agencies cannot overlook that there are, in fact, pupils who do have more than one special need. For example, many students who are linguistically different might also be physically or mentally handicapped. Therefore, a careful distinction must be made between bilingual students with no physical, intellectual, or emotional handicaps and those with accompanying handicaps.

This problem of unmet needs of students is further illustrated in an article by John Sloan, who was the secondary school level chairperson of the California Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages:

> Young Woo sits in the front seat, but it does not do much good. She is legally blind and cannot see the board very well with her better eye, even with the telescope that the mainstream teacher has given her. Students with special education problems are arriving in ESL classrooms, and there does not seem to be any way of giving them the

special help they need. Psychological services in many districts say that students must have at least a year or two to acculturate themselves before being evaluated.

What the Law Says About This Problem.

Even before Public Law 94-142, many other rulings and laws addressed the issue of appropriate assessment and placement of LEP children. (They include the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and law suits represented in *Lau v. Nichols and Diana v. The State Board of Education*.) PL 94-142 addresses education for all handicapped children, and it stipulates that non-English-speaking children be assessed in their native language. This theoretically would provide a fair assessment of all children and more appropriate educational planning.

The State of California is also working on competencies for licensing bilingual assessors. However, currently there are no requirements that LEP children be assessed by licensed bilingual assessors.

The Practical Problems of Assessment of LEP Children

What does the *reality* of the situation hold? As assessors, you are no doubt aware of the problems of putting needs, laws, and theories into practice. We have several major problems confronting us that, make assessment of LEP Chinese-speaking children a thorny issue, rife with many considerations and few answers at the present. By understanding these problems we can begin to make an important step toward finding suitable alternatives and workable solutions.

Some of the problems and concerns that assessors face are that while we may recognize the need and the mandate to assess LEP Chinese American children in their native language,

- We lack personnel who speak the many Chinese dialects that are represented among California's Chinese American students.
- We lack assessment instruments normed for students from other cultural backgrounds and educational experiences.
- We lack procedures for putting together an assessment team that can gather the information necessary to understand the LEP Chinese American students' needs.
- We lack sufficient programs that can meet both educational and acculturation needs of these students.
- Each day, the number of LEP Chinese speaking immigrants and refugee students continues to increase in our school system.

There are many other concerns, but the ones we have already listed are troublesome in and of themselves. You may have already encountered some of these problems. With increasing numbers of immigrant students in our classrooms, the problem is certain to become more acute. As with other ethnic groups, a percentage of these children will need special education services, yet the need for non-biased assessment tools for LEP Chinese-speaking children remains an issue.

Looking for a Solution

Without tools and without an abundance of Chinese-speaking assessors, what is the next best thing? First, we need to be knowledgeable about what is an appropriate assessment, what it encompasses, and where alternative or additional methods of assessment may be needed.

Modifying the Assessment Process

In assessing any child to determine educational needs, we need to go through an information gathering process that includes the following six areas:

- Reports from teachers and other personnel
- Parent interview
- Assessment using instruments
- Observation within one or more settings
- Summary and interpretation of all information
- Information of previous academic functioning prior to immigration.

We need to be circumspect in using the full information-gathering process when assessing the LEP Chinese American child. In assessing LEP children, we may find that each stage presents gaps. By gathering information from all areas, we may put together all the parts of the whole. As in assessing any child, gathering information from one area can help corroborate or raise questions about results obtained from another area.

We might find, for example, that our assessment instruments reveal strengths and deficits in some aspect of functioning, while observations and parent reports reveal quite different information. This, then, would serve as a clue to do further investigation, perhaps using a more comprehensive battery of tests and observation over a period of time.

Let's now look at what additional information might be needed in each of these information-gathering areas when assessing the LEP Chinese-speaking student.

Developing Procedures for an Effective Multidisciplinary Assessment Team

Each school district may want to develop its own procedures for building an effective multidisciplinary assessment team for the LEP Chinese-speaking child. To help you conceptualize what may be needed, here are some areas you may wish to consider:

[TRAINER NOTE]: In discussing procedures and roles, use a blackboard or overhead projector to stress important points in your discussion.

Recommended Procedures

Determine who will be on the multidisciplinary assessment team.

In addition to regular members of your assessment team, you may also need to include additional members, such as a bilingual teacher or an interpreter, if Chinese-speaking assessors are not available. Determining in advance what additional members are needed can make the assessment process smoother and more coordinated. You should avoid looking for interpreters/translators at the last minute.

Determine when an LEP Chinese American child should be referred for further assessment.

By determining criteria for referral, you will create a more effective information gathering process. Criteria should specify the types of academic, social, or adjustment difficulties the LEP child presents. Criteria might also include the use of precisely described classroom observations, initial parent reports, and information gathered from screening instruments. These criteria should also fall minimally within the guidelines established for all children. Parents seeking alternate placement for their child or additional services, may also request that the child be referred for assessment.

Provide an in-service training meeting for all members of the assessment team.

This meeting could be led by the school psychologist. At this meeting, roles of each member of the assessment team should be precisely defined. You may need to make adjustments from your usual procedures. Whereas, the psychologist may ordinarily handle in-depth parent interviews, it may be more efficient and effective to train a bilingual teacher to take over this function. Roles that you assign in this area then may depend on availability and skills of personnel. Again, it is important to determine these roles ahead of time, to ensure that information gathered is well coordinated.

Let's now look at what these roles might include:

Roles for Members of the Assessment Team

Teachers and other classroom personnel

Teachers in both regular and bilingual classrooms need to be watchful of children presenting both educational problems and acculturation conflicts. Such conflicts can lead to poor academic performance, but it would be a serious oversight to assume that the LEP child's poor performance is solely attributable to acculturation difficulties.

Consequently, teacher reports need to reflect fully the range of behavior and academic problems within the classroom. As with any child, this would include information about academic progress over a period of time, peer interaction, attentiveness, and gross motor skills.

Information from other personnel may also be needed to determine whether further assessment is needed. The resource specialist may work with the teacher in providing initial observation and assessment for screening purposes. If the teacher, for example, expresses concern to the resource specialist over the child's apparent problems in visual and auditory attentiveness, some initial screening tests probing auditory and visual perception and memory could be employed.

Screening, however, may be more difficult if the child does not speak any English. In this case, an interpreter/translator may be included in the screening. While translated assessment instruments pose numerous technical and validity problems (which we will discuss in a later part of this module), such information nonetheless can be valuable during the screening process.

Teachers and resource personnel might also provide observation information. We will discuss considerations for observation in another section of this module.

Parents

In Module 1, we discussed some considerations for including non-English-speaking Chinese American parents in the assessment process. Here is a quick summary of those basic considerations:

- We need to inform parents about the reasons for conducting interviews and explain the roles of school personnel, as well as the function of the assessment.
- We need to let parents know the type of information we seek and the purpose for seeking it. These information areas may include: the child's previous educational experiences, birth and medical history,

developmental milestones, current behavior in the home, and parent concerns or questions.

Assessors

Assessors may include a psychologist, speech and language clinician, physical therapist, occupational therapist, or school nurse. In addition, outside consultants (such as a pediatrician, audiologist, or neurologist) may provide additional assessments as needed.

As many assessments may be required, your team should decide who will be a central gathering point for information. Usually, this will be the psychologist or program specialist. This person will also ensure that pertinent information is transmitted to each assessor.

For example, if an audiologic evaluation is requested, the audiologist needs to be informed that the child is limited in English proficiency. In this case, the audiologist may need to have an interpreter available to explain instructions and procedures to both the parents and child. Or possibly the psychologist may suspect the child has perceptual deficits. A well-coordinated information network may reveal information that corroborates this finding. In another case, the parent interview may reveal that the child has a history of febrile seizures. The occupational therapist confirms that the child has specific perceptual motor difficulties and the neurologist detects corresponding "soft signs" indicating brain dysfunction.

School or program administrator

In addition to ensuring that proper procedures and policies have been followed, — including those safeguarding confidentiality — the school or program administrator may also be involved in securing interpreters.

As we discussed in Module 1, selecting an interpreter requires looking at several criteria beyond language facility. In our section on *Assessment Using Instruments*, we will look at selection criteria for interpreters who assist in actual assessments. Ideally, administrators should select a pool of interpreters who are qualified and trained to perform translation for a variety of assessment purposes, focusing on both parent interview and child assessment.

The administrator should be responsible for ensuring that bilingual personnel are recruited, or that outside bilingual consultants are hired. In either case, administrators should also ensure that both confidentiality and professionalism are maintained.

Administrators may also be involved in securing necessary requests for information and assessments. In this regard, they are also responsible for informing LEP Chinese-speaking parents of their child's educational rights. Administrators may also serve as the central information gathering point.

Finally, administrators should assign a central "checkpoint" — perhaps the school psychologist or the bilingual educational consultant — who is knowledgeable about assessment bias. If modifications to the assessment process are used, (such as the use of interpreters/translators) the assessment team needs to consider how this impacts on the assessment scores, norms, validity of findings, and placement issues. This task of "checking for bias" should be built into your procedures to ensure it is a regular part of your assessment with LEP children. We will discuss what that checklist might include in another section of this module.

Checklist of Roles for the Assessment Team

We will now look at a hypothetical assessment team and assign roles and responsibilities.

[TRAINER NOTE]: Hand out "Determining Roles of the Assessment Team." Have the group match "assessment need" to "role." There is no one correct way to assign roles. Rather, this requires thought and consideration of each team member's expertise and the child's needs. For the purpose of this exercise, assume that none of the school personnel are Chinese speaking and that both the child and parents speak Chinese and very little English.

Determining Roles of the Assessment Team

Handout Instructions: For the purposes of this exercise, we will assume that the following list of people are involved in the assessment process of a LEP Chinese-speaking child. Attached is an alphabetically coded list of "Assessment Tasks." Using the codes, assign tasks to each member of the team. Keep in mind that more than one member of the team may need to be involved in a task, especially if translation services are required.

Assessment Team Members	Assessment Tasks
1. School Administrator:	
2. Parent:	
3. School Psychologist:	
4. School Nurse:	
5. School Speech Therapist:	
6. Resource Specialist:	
7. Classroom Teacher:	
8. Teacher's Aide:	
9. Interpreter/Translator:	
10. Outside Consultants: -Physician -Audiologist -Occupational Therapist	

Assessment Tasks

Below is a partial list of assessment tasks. Use the alphabetical code and assign these tasks to members of the assessment team. More than one person can be assigned to a task.

a. Serves as central information gathering point

b. Informs parents of need and purpose for interview

c. Secure parent release to secure medical information

d. Observes child in the home

e. Observes child in the classroom

f. Provides initial screening

g. Reports academic problem areas

h. Details progress in classroom program

i. Initiates referral for further assessment

j. Conducts assessment or tests in perceived problem area(s)

k. Meets with parents for interview

l. Arranges for interpreter/translator

m. Briefs interpreter/translator on interview and assessment needs

n. Sends pertinent information to outside consultants

o. Provides overall summary and interpretation of assessment and observation data

p. Meets with parents to discuss placement recommendations

q. Makes placement decision

r. Informs parents of their child's educational rights

Assessing LEP Chinese-Speaking Children: Selecting and Modifying Instruments and Procedures

OBJECTIVE 2:	Participants will have a framework for selecting and modifying assessment instruments and procedures.
OUTCOME 2.1	Participants will know three criteria to consider when selecting instruments for use with LEP Chinese-speaking children.
OUTCOME 2.2	Participants will know five criteria for selecting an interpreter/translator for assessment of LEP Chinese-speaking children.
OUTCOME 2.3	Participants will know two ways that assessment instruments can be modified and how these modifications may affect results.

Criteria for Selecting Assessment Instruments

In assessing any child, you would first consider the following general parameters for selecting assessment instruments:

What is the reason for this referral?

Did the classroom teacher note that the child is unresponsive in the classroom? What evidence supports this concern? Has the child been performing poorly in all academic areas or in specific ones? What previous classroom modifications have or have not been successful? Did the teacher refer the child for assessment because there were questions about the child's learning style? Was the referral initiated by parents who wanted their child considered for another type of placement? Is further assessment needed to develop the child's IEP? Is the teacher uncertain whether the child's problems are related to acculturation difficulties or learning problems? Did the teacher inform parents of the potential need for further assessment?

What is the purpose of this assessment?

Once you know the reason for the referral, you can determine its purpose. For example, if the teacher needs more information about the child's learning style, you might want to assess the child's approach and attentiveness to many types of learning tasks, so *you can provide recommendations* to the teacher. If further assessment is needed to evaluate classroom placement and future program needs, then you may need a full battery of assessment instruments that provides sufficient data to support your placement recommendation.

Is this assessment instrument appropriate for the child being assessed?

If we are trying to determine functional age ranges, we need to eliminate tests that are normed for age ranges above or below that of the child we are assessing. For example, if we are assessing a child who is 11 years old, we cannot use the scores obtained from an instrument normed for a three to seven year old population.

Quite obviously, we would also eliminate assessment instruments that require unreasonable responses from the child we are assessing. We would not attempt to administer a picture pointing vocabulary task to a severely visually impaired child, nor would we attempt a personality profile assessment requiring drawing skills with a child with little fine-motor control.

In other words, the above are all practical considerations you would use in selecting assessment instruments for any child. There are additional considerations relating to the LEP Chinese-speaking child.

Does the assessment tool require that instructions be translated?

With some assessment tasks, (such as the Goodenough "Draw A Person" Test), instructions need to be conveyed in the child's native language while the basic construct of the test may be cross-culturally appropriate. Similarly, some gross-motor, fine-motor, and perceptual tasks may only require instructions to be translated into Chinese. Thus, the assessor needs to consider how the use of an interpreter might potentially affect responses and whether a translated version would defeat the purpose of the test. It is important to point out that some tests have been translated and standardized based on a Chinese population (i.e. WAIS), but one should be aware that the norms of these translated versions still might not be relevant to the specific child one must assess.

Are actual test items amenable to translation?

Does translation alter the type of information that will be gathered? If items cannot be translated and must be omitted, does this leave a sufficient number of items to provide the information you seek? Some assessment instruments, particularly those that assess language and cognitive areas, cannot be administered without translating both administrative instructions and actual test items. In these cases, modifications in administrative procedures and test items will alter the validity of norms, although data obtained may still be useful in the overall assessment process.

Are test items culturally and experientially relevant, given the child's background?

Certain test items may be "culturally loaded." While you do not necessarily need to eliminate assessment instruments that contain a few "culturally loaded" items, you need to consider whether elimination or substitution of these items will affect the overall usefulness of information you are seeking. This is particularly true with assessment or screening tools probing a small number of discrete behaviors. (In a later part of this module, we will examine clues to culturally loaded test items in more detail.)

In summary, we need to establish procedures for selecting instruments. These procedures include those we use in assessing all children, and they include additional considerations in assessing the LEP child.

Let's now assume that at least some of your assessment will need to include the services of an interpreter/translator. How do you go about selecting an interpreter/translator?

Criteria for Selecting an Interpreter/Translator for the Assessment Process

[TRAINER NOTE]: We've already discussed considerations for selecting an interpreter/translator for the parent interview. Many of those same considerations apply to the assessment process. If you have not already covered that Section, review Objective 4/Outcome 4.2 of Language Module 2.

Alternatives to Bilingual Assessors

Ideally, the LEP Chinese-speaking child should be assessed by a bilingual (Chinese and English) assessor, trained in both assessment adaptation and educational testing. The likelihood that school districts have access to such personnel, however, is slim.

If such personnel is not available, we might consider several alternatives, including:

- Having an English-speaking assessor administer the assessment with translating assistance or
- Training an interpreter/translator to administer the assessment directly to the child, with supervision by the trained psychologist/assessor.

In deciding which approach to use, you need to know what is involved in administering each assessment instrument and the information you are seeking. Some forms of assessment and educational testing require initial instructions which enable the student to complete assessment items without further verbal instructions. Other assessments depend heavily on on-going instructions and prompts by the assessor.

When the assessor administers the test with assistance in translating instructions, the assessor may be able to maintain better control over the assessment process. For example, an educational test may ask the child to classify shapes using verbal prompts in the child's language, such as thin/thick, rough/smooth, or heavy/light. If the child is initially unsuccessful in classifying objects, the assessor might subsequently look more indepth at the child's ability to learn after one or more trials. The assessor might include particular prompts, cues, or forms of demonstration to observe the child's learning style.

These are aspects of assessment that interpreters/translators may not be trained to do. Or if the interpreter/translator is instructed by the assessor to provide prompts, the interpreter/translator may not have the expertise to respond to a test situation and gather further information using appropriate assessment procedures. Thus, having the interpreter/

translator administer the test may limit the scope of information you can gather. On the other hand, sentence-by-sentence or item-by-item translating is not ideal either. The effect of having the assessor administer the test, while having another person serve as the verbal interpreter, may create a disjointed and untenable assessment situation — one which is technically problematic. In one case, the assessor may be demonstrating some aspect of the task, only to have the verbal translation follow after the demonstration. If the task involves a verbal response from the child, the assessor would then need to ask the interpreter whether the response was correct and these additional exchanges might cue the child about his or her performance.

Many of these technical problems can be minimized by training interpreters on assessment procedures and rehearsing coordination of translating and test administration, including the recording of responses. Even if interpreters provide technical administration of tests, a trained and qualified assessor should be present at all assessments to supervise procedures and certainly to observe the child's responses. What the assessor observes during the assessment session is critical to the interpretation of results.

In some assessment situations, you may wish to have the child respond to those items presented in English and then in Chinese. You might ask that a child repeat a series of numbers first in English and then in Chinese. While you may be technically altering assessment procedures by modifying the test in this way, you may be able to gain valuable comparative information through testing in dual languages.

Selecting and Training Interpreter/Translators for the Assessment Process

In selecting an interpreter/translator for assessment assistance, you should consider the following minimum criteria:

- Languages spoken fluently
- Translation skills
- Technical assessment skills

Let's briefly consider what is involved in each area:

[TRAINER NOTE]: Provide handout "Checklist for Selecting and Training Interpreters / Translators."

Checklist For Selecting And Training Interpreters/Translators: Trainer's Copy

Skill Area	Competencies
Languages Spoken	1. Speaks child's dialect fluently. 2. Knows regional differences in dialects, e.g. vocabulary differences between Mandarin spoken in Taiwan and the People's Republic of China. Is fluent in English.
Translation Skills	1. Understands the difference between word-for-word translation and context translation. 2. Knows when English words do not have suitable Chinese equivalents. 3. Can translate accurately without omitting, adding, or changing intent of message through personal interpretation.
Assessment Skills	1. Has been trained in assessment procedures. 2. Knows how to provide instructions without additional verbal and non-verbal cues. 3. Knows how to record responses without cueing child as to correctness of response 4. Knows when to ask assessor for further information. 5. Knows how to convey child's verbal responses to assessor, e.g. child used immature verbal response. 6. Knows how to present tasks.

Assessment Skills continued

7. Knows how to cue child with selected prompts or demonstration when needed.
8. Trained to observe more subtle aspects in child's response that can be valuable in interpreting results.
9. Knows which test items do not have Chinese equivalents either culturally or linguistically.
10. Can maintain confidentiality.

Modifying Assessment Instruments and Procedures

The Current Unavailability of Normed Instruments for LEP Chinese American Children

As you know, we currently do not have assessment instruments developed and normed for LEP Chinese American children. Part of the problem of developing such instruments lies in finding a large enough homogeneous group speaking the same or even similar dialects. Our current assessment instruments are normed largely for English-speaking American children.

In spite of our limitations, we cannot afford to abandon the use of assessment instruments. In translated or modified tests, normative data, such as IQ and Mental Age Scores, may not be applicable to our group of LEP Chinese-speaking children; yet, the information gained from administering such tests can be extremely valuable in helping us make placement decisions and LEP recommendations. As with assessing all children, we need a defined set of areas that will be assessed, as well as guidelines for looking at those areas. Modifying these instruments for use with LEP children may add assessment bias — either favorable or unfavorable — but we can control bias to some degree by recognizing where it may be a factor and making note of these in our interpretation of results.

Ways to Modify Assessment Instruments

Assessment instruments and educational tests can be modified in several ways for assessment of LEP children:

- Instructions and test items can be translated in the child's native language via an interpreter/translator.
- Specific test items that are determined to be culturally or linguistically inappropriate may be omitted.
- Specific test items that are determined to be culturally or linguistically inappropriate may be substituted with parallel competencies, if available.
- Some assessments and educational tests may be conducted in both English and Chinese.

In altering assessment instruments, you need to keep these considerations in mind:

- Will translation alter the degree of difficulty of each test item? Does the translated version make the item simpler or more difficult?

- Does the substituted item or competency probe the same type or skill as the original item?
- Will the child feel more comfortable and responsive with a Chinese-speaking interpreter/translator?

Knowing When Modification May be Necessary

We have already seen how interpreters/translators might be used in the assessment process. Let's now consider how you can evaluate individual assessment instruments for potentially biased or inappropriate test items and how those instruments may be modified.

[TRAINER NOTE]: Provide participants with handout "Checklist for Reviewing Assessment Instruments" and "Assessment Instrument Worksheet."

If available, review these materials with one or more widely available assessment instruments, such as the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, The Boehm, The Leiter International Performance Scales, or the Goodenough Harris Draw-A-Person.

If group is large enough, divide into smaller groups, each group taking an assessment instrument to determine where modification may be needed. Have the group use the prepared worksheet to report their findings.

Checklist for Reviewing and Modifying Assessment Instruments

Review Assessment Procedures

1) Determine whether test administration requires translated verbal instructions.

2) If administration includes time limits, translation may require that you modify time limits.

3) If administration requires a combination of both verbal instructions and demonstration, determine whether it is feasible for the interpreter to do both. This will require training the interpreter to provide the appropriate number of cues.

4) If test items require verbal responses from the child, you should arrange to tape record the session. This will enable you to review the child's responses with the interpreter and assess appropriateness and complexity of the child's responses.

5) Provide a written form of the instructions to the interpreter, so she is prepared for the assessment. Go over general instructions, as well as individual items, to make sure the interpreter does not have questions regarding translation of terms.

Review Items and Materials Used for Cultural Bias

1) Review information on the child's background, including country of origin, socioeconomic level, and educational experiences.

2) Review items and materials used in the instrument(s) you will be using and *mark items* that may potentially be outside of the cultural experiences of the child, or which may be represented differently in the child's culture.

3) Carefully review adaptive behavior items for appropriateness. If you are interviewing parents on self-help eating and dressing skills, be sure to inquire about routines that may be more customary and within the expectations of that culture.

4) Items you should carefully review include those that require verbal or visual recognition of:

   - Household objects, such as furniture and kitchen utensils

   - Vehicle types, such as ambulance and police car

- Sports equipment or actions, such as football scenes, archery, skiing, or tobogganing
- Outdoor fixtures and building type, such as traffic signs, "skyscrapers," "ranches," and "bungalows"
- Values represented by pictures, for example, "freedom," "honesty," "respect," or "creativity"
- Professions, such as doctor, judge, and firefighter
- Clothing, such as tuxedo, slippers vs. loafers, raincoats, galoshes, and suspenders
- Historically related items, e.g. Pilgrim, Thanksgiving, and pioneer

You need not necessarily omit items such as the above. However, you should mark potentially biased items, carefully review how the child performed in those areas and then report these considerations accordingly in your interpretation of results.

Review Items That May Not be Suitable for Translation

1) Some items may not be suitable for translation because there is no Chinese equivalent for the English word.

2) In certain cases the Chinese translation changes the level of complexity of the item.

3) Review and mark those items that may not be suitable for translation or which require careful review by an interpreter. You should review these items with a bilingual interpreter and be especially cautious if the interpreter indicates two or more Chinese words are needed to come up with an equivalent meaning. For example, descriptors or adjectives represented by pictures, (such as degrees of emotion such as happy/elated), might be described by the interpreter as "happy/very happy" in Chinese.

4) Some language tasks probe comprehension of more grammatically complex phrases. Translation to Chinese may not yield the same level of complexity, as grammatical structure of the Chinese language is very different.

Determine if the Overall Test Will Yield Adequate Data

Having marked items which may need to be omitted or altered, consider whether these modifications will affect the usefulness of the entire instrument. If your instrument contains only a small number of items being probed, and many of those items are potentially inappropriate for the LEP child, you should consider using another instrument.

Determine if Two or More Instruments are Needed

If you feel the instrument you have selected will still leave "gaps" in data collection, consider the use of two or more instruments probing the same area. You may want to include non-verbal tools, such as the Draw-A-Person Test, but not to the exclusion of instruments that more fully assess all areas of functioning and modalities. Do not assume that instruments or subtests probing only non-verbal areas are sufficient.

Determine "Qualified" Normative Data

If you have modified the instrument, you will need to modify how you report results and scores. While you may not be able to report conclusive IQ scores or mental ages, provided you have collected sufficient information, you should be able to report some approximation of age level functioning along with a report of test modifications that qualify those findings.

For example, if the child missed many of the items which you had previously marked as potentially biased, omit those items from the total number of items and prorate the child's score based on this new total. Compare the difference between the original score in which all items are included and your modified score. Your summary should discuss other data gleaned from teacher and parent reports and observation that substantiate your findings.

Psychoeducation Module
Objective 2/Outcome 2.3
Handout 5

Assessment Instrument Worksheet
[Trainer's Copy]

Name Of Instrument: ______________________________

Type/Purpose: ______________________________

In the space below, indicate those items that you would mark as requiring modification of the following reasons as coded:

PB = potentially biased
RT = requires translation
NT = not suitable for translation
SC = substitute with parallel competency from child's culture

Area Assessed/Item	Modifications Needed

Total Number Of Items In This Instrument: ______________
Number Of Items That Are Coded PB: ______________
Number Of Items That Are Coded RT: ______________
Number Of Items That Are Coded NT: ______________
Number Of Items That Are Coded SC: ______________

Based on your findings:

1. Do you feel this instrument will serve its intended purpose?

2. Do you feel this instrument will provide adequate information for:
   - a. Initial Screening: _____yes _____no _____ not applicable
   - b. IQ or Mental Age: _____yes _____no _____ not applicable
   - c. Placement recommendation:

     ___yes ___no ___not applicable
   - d. IEP recommendations: ___yes ___no ___not applicable
   - e. Other: ______________________________

The Role of Observation in Assessing the LEP Chinese-Speaking Child

OBJECTIVE 3:	**Participants will have a framework for observing the LEP Chinese-speaking child as part of the assessment process.**
OUTCOME 3.1	**Participants will know two reasons why observation is an important part of assessment.**
OUTCOME 3.2	**Participants will know two approaches for collecting observation data.**
OUTCOME 3.3	**Participants will know four factors that can lead to alternative interpretations of the LEP Chinese-speaking child's behavior.**

Why Observation is Important

In assessing any child, observation plays an important role in the overall process of assessment and for a number of reasons:

1. Observation enables us to gather additional information about the child's functioning level in a more natural setting, such as in the classroom, playground or home environment:

    Example: We might find the child is more at ease in using communicative skills with Chinese-speaking peers and adults.

2. Observation data can support or call into question findings obtained through assessment instruments:

    Example: We might find in the assessment process that the child has difficulties following visual-perceptual cues provided by the examiner in structured tasks, but by through observation, we may discover that the child often carefully watches peers as an approach to taking on new tasks.

3. Observation data can help us more fully interpret our overall findings with regard to practical recommendations:

    Example: We may look at our findings and summarize that the child has greater language skills in Chinese than in English, but recommend role-modeling by peers as an approach for remediating visual-perceptual deficits and developing better English language facility.

With the LEP Chinese-speaking child, observation can help us isolate whether the child's learning difficulties may be related in part to acculturation or to more general learning deficits that encompass both language modalities. This in turn will help us plan activities to help remediate deficits, be they functional ones for English, or more global learning handicaps.

Approaches to Collecting Observation Data

Part of your observation will include collecting information on the LEP Chinese-speaking child's skills in a functional setting. As with all children, your observations will ideally include a range of interactions, including:

- Classroom interaction with both peers and adults
- One-to-one interaction with a Chinese-speaking peer
- One-to-one interaction with an English-speaking peer
- One-to-one interaction with a Chinese-speaking adult
- One-to-one interaction with an English-speaking adult
- Group interaction with peers in unstructured activities
- Group interaction with peers in structured activities
- Self-direction in both structured and unstructured activities
- Interactions with siblings and parents.

In looking at those forms of interactions, you would observe not only how the child initiates and responds to various peers and adults in different settings, but also how peers and adults interact with the child.

In each of these different types of interactions, you may be looking for a *set of behaviors*. In looking at the range of peer interactions, you may wish to observe not only functional skills, but also how the child's social-personal skills and feelings of self-esteem may affect the child's behavior. You may find that peers play an important role in motivating the child to tackle new tasks. These are factors you may not gather through administration of assessment instruments.

Let's now consider two approaches that might help you successfully gather the range of information that you need. They are:

Classroom Observation

There are numerous tools available that can help you in your approach to classroom observation and how data is collected. Many of these tools contain carefully defined areas to observe, along with time limits for observation.

Structure the type of information to be gathered. If these tools are not available to you, you may also develop your own observation criteria. While observation is often looked upon as an informal way of gathering information, you should minimally structure the type of information you need to gather. You can then discuss these areas with the classroom teacher or resource specialist to determine the best time of day to observe the child. You may need to schedule several classroom visits to gather information on different areas.

Relate observed behavior to context. If you are also receiving observation information from teachers, you should ask for a full description of the context relating to the child's behavior. If the child's classroom behavior is simply described as "passive", "inattentive," or "uncooperative," we cannot be certain that these remarks are accurate or even what they refer to. Full documentation of what was observed is especially critical when perceived behaviors may be subject to misinterpretation because of cultural differences.

Compare English and Chinese modalities. Your observations should also include some comparisons of the child's relative strengths and weaknesses in performing activities and academic skills in Chinese and in English. The child may function poorly in academics presented in English, and while this may not be an indicator of the child's potential, it certainly informs us of functional deficits that require special assistance.

Observe the child over time. The child who is a recent immigrant will go through a period of acculturation. During this period, the child's behavior may change, particularly in social-emotional areas, especially as the child becomes more adjusted to her new school environment. The recent immigrant child may "hang back" in peer activities. The child who has problems keeping up with lessons may show signs of low self-esteem, especially if she has previously excelled in academics. Yet, behaviors seen when immigrant children first enter the American classroom may quickly change in a short period of time depending on how quickly children adjust to their new environment.

One-to-One Observation with an Interpreter/Translator

You may want to supplement your classroom observations with an informal interview within the classroom or other comfortable setting that enables you to look at more specific behaviors and skills. In contrast to assessment with instruments, the approach to the interview is more open-ended in the types of materials used and procedures for conducting the interview. Nevertheless, it is best to organize your observation needs and plan ahead of time, particularly when assessing the LEP Chinese American child.

If the child speaks both English and Chinese, you may wish to conduct the observation interview in both languages. This will enable you to observe the child's ease in using both languages in a similar setting.

Coordinate the interview with an interpreter. As a first step, you should review the purpose of the observation interview with the interpreter and how you will approach the child. Both of you, for example, may be in the classroom together and during an independent activity period, you may casually approach the child. If the interview is conducted in Chinese, you should tape-record the session so you can later review responses with the interpreter.

Determine areas that will be observed. As an example, you may want to observe social language skills or the child's ability to follow verbal, visual or auditory cues in taking on new tasks. Your interview observation might include two parts: presenting a choice of toys for the child to play with and then asking the child a series of socially-oriented questions. By initially playing with the child, you may be able to gain greater rapport prior to asking questions.

The selection of materials that you or the interpreter present to the child will depend on the age and interests of that age group. You should select materials that promote spontaneous conversation, e.g. a doll with clothing and furniture, a puzzle, manipulative toys, or a story book. The observer can then initiate conversation about the selected objects before asking the child further questions.

Your observations during this session may also include general questions about the classroom, the child's interests, favorite activities, family members, favorite after-school activities, names and ages of friends and siblings, and other similar social questions.

Factors That Can Lead to Alternative Interpretations of Observed Behaviors

[TRAINER NOTE]: Provide handout "Factors that Can Provide Alternative Interpretations of Observed Behaviors," and "Workshop Activity: Classroom Observation."

After you have observed the child and documented the context of those observed behaviors, you will need to look at those factors that may explain why those behaviors are present. Some of those factors may indicate that more investigation is needed to fully understand the child's behavior, particularly if problems are evident. Understanding the source of those behaviors can provide you with the right interpretation, and also the right recommendations.

Your interpretation of observed behavior should consider these four factors:

- Acculturation Difficulties
- Handicapping Conditions
- Health or Medical Problem
- Social-Emotional Factors

In discussing these factors in more detail, let's take a hypothetical example of an observed behavior. We will assume that you have observed a child who appears to have "poor visual and verbal attending skills." Among your many observations, you noted the following:

> When the teacher was providing instructions on a scissors and paper fine-motor activity, you observed the child attempting to manipulate the scissors, rather than listening to the verbal instructions and demonstration. On another occasion, when all the children were taking turns identifying shapes on a board, the LEP child was observed to be watching peers rather than the activity. The teacher was observed to call the child's name several times before the child responded.

Let's now consider how these examples of observed behavior may have alternative interpretations, depending on what you find to be related factors.

Acculturation Difficulties

If the child has recently immigrated and has been in the classroom for a short period of time, she may be adjusting to the new environment.

- The child may not be familiar with some of the materials you present. In our example, this child may be unfamiliar with the type of scissors presented. The novelty of new experiences may cause distraction from other areas, such as the teacher's verbal instructions.

or

- The child may not be proficient in English, and therefore does not attend to verbal instructions that now sound meaningless to him. If the child does not understand directions or what is expected of him, he may watch peers to gain clues.

or

- Some recent immigrant children are given new names in lieu of their Chinese ones. The child may not readily recognize his new American name nor a teacher's different pronunciation of his Chinese name.

Of course, to determine whether these cultural factors apply, you will need to do further investigation. This may include parent interviews concerning the child's prior educational experiences. It may necessitate observation over a period of time to see how the child is adjusting to the classroom. Finally, you may also wish to observe the child performing similar activities presented with Chinese instructions.

If cultural factors are definitely part of this child's behavioral profile, your recommendations to help this child overcome poor attending skills will include ways to help the child adjust more quickly to the classroom.

Handicapping Conditions

If the child has a handicapping condition, such as auditory and/ or visual perceptual deficits, her poor attending skills may indeed be a reflection of this problem.

- The child may be perceptually "overwhelmed" when presented with both materials and verbal instructions. In this example, the child prefers to focus on the object, which she can both see and manipulate.

or

- The child may have difficulties recognizing visual shapes due to visual perceptual deficits. The level of this task may be too difficult with the result that she tunes out and focuses on something more interesting — in this case, peers.

or

- The child may not readily respond to two competing stimuli because of a figure-ground auditory processing problem. The child may be listening and watching peers answering the teacher's questions, yet not readily process that her name is being called when her attention is focused elsewhere.

If learning deficits or handicapping conditions are the source of the child's poor attending skills, your recommendations should subsequently determine ways that may best help remediate these problems. However, in order to determine whether handicapping conditions are the cause of the problem, further investigation must be undertaken through assessment of these problem areas, parent interview, or additional observations.

Health or Medical Problems

If health or medical problems (such as hearing loss or visual impairment) are factors, this would certainly explain poor attending skills. Children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may not have had routine hearing and vision screening. Chronic ear infections may also be a source of temporary hearing loss.

Hearing and vision screenings should be routine with any child suspected of having auditory or visual attending deficits. If such problems turn out to be the case, your recommendations will also need to include ways for the teacher, therapist, and possibly, peers, to help the child develop newly found auditory or visual skills.

Social-Emotional Factors

If the child is undergoing social-emotional problems, she may indeed exhibit poor attending skills. Children who are depressed, for example, may appear listless, unmotivated, and thus, inattentive. It is important to remember that some recent immigrant children may have undergone extremely difficult situations, drastic changes, and perhaps economic hardships. The child may come from a family that is struggling to survive. She may be expected to help out after school, so that opportunities to develop friendships are limited. If the child is doing poorly in school, she may be suffering from low self-esteem and perhaps family pressures to do better. The reasons for social-emotional problems are many, and such problems have been found in Chinese American children with greater frequency than in their Caucasian counterparts.

Determining whether social-emotional problems are factors requires sensitivity on your part in interviewing parents, observing the child in the classroom, and assessing the child in those areas. If these factors turn out to be the case, your recommendations should include a plan to counsel both the child and parents, and to find ways in which teachers and peers can help the child feel more confident or comfortable within the classroom.

Workshop Activity
Examples of Observed Behavior:
Trainer's Copy

[TRAINER NOTE]: After reviewing "factors that can lead to alternative interpretations of observed behaviors," have participants break up into smaller groups to participate in workshop activity.

In this activity, we'll be looking at some hypothetical examples of observed behavior. The participants' task will be to outline areas that require further investigation, based on the four factors that can lead to alternative interpretations. They are:

- Acculturation Factors
- Handicapping Conditions
- Health or Medical Problems
- Social-Emotional Problems

This activity is designed to help participants consider all factors that might enter into the LEP Chinese-speaking child's behavior and to propose activities that can help remediate these problems based on the source of the problem.

Set up the workshop as follows:

1. Divide into groups of 2-4 people.
2. Trainer assigns three hypothetical cases of observed behavior.
3. Ask the group to review the briefly described behavior. Inform the group that the description is purposefully short and incomplete, because more information is necessary to interpret what is really going on.
4. Ask the group to consider possible issues in each of the four factor areas that may contribute to different meanings.
5. The group should write down these possibilities in the appropriate factor category.

6. Next, the group should decide what activities might be suitable for the child, based on each of the factors.
7. Provide the participants an example sheet in which these areas have been completed.
8. After 15 minutes, the group will come together and share what they've uncovered.

Workshop Activity
Trainer's Copy

Example of Observed Behavior

Ms. Smith passes out crayons and sheets of paper with various geometric shapes. In English, she instructs the class to color all circles red and all squares blue. As the class begins the assignment, you notice that Chang, an LEP Chinese-speaking child, is watching classmates before beginning his work. You later notice him copying what the classmate seated next to him is doing.

What Might Be Factors In Chang's Observed Behavior?

1. Acculturation Factors:

   Example: If Chang does not understand English verbal instructions and is reluctant to ask questions, he may rely on watching peers to determine what's expected of him. Chang also may not be aware that this is an independent activity.

2. Handicapping Conditions:

   Example: If Chang has visual-perceptual problems, the combination of having to use both shape and color discrimination skills may be too complex a task for him. He may be watching peers and copying work to gain additional clues -- or perhaps because this is the only way he can complete this assignment without additional help.

3. Health Or Medical Problem:

   Example: If Chang has a hearing loss, he may not have heard the verbal instructions. He may be attempting to get non-auditory clues to the activity by watching peers.

4. Social-Emotional Problems:

   Example: If Chang has a "fear of failure," he may not feel confident of his ability to perform the task correctly. He may be watching a peer who generally does good work, in hopes that he can gain additional clues to do a better job.

What Activities Would You Propose to Help the Child?

1. If this behavior is related to Acculturation Factors,
   I would suggest the following:

   - Meet with Chang individually, with an interpreter, if necessary, to find ways to make it easier for him to ask questions when he is confused. Structure classroom activities so that verbal instructions can be easily accompanied by demonstration by aides. Encourage the use of more appropriate peer modeling, perhaps one in which a peer seated next to Chang verbalize what he is doing. Give praise to other peers that ask questions, so that Chang is not reluctant to do so, too.

2. If this behavior is related to Handicapping Conditions,
   I would suggest the following:

   - Structure classroom activities so that an aide can work with Chang and provide additional clues for approaching this task, e.g. going through and first coloring all the circles red, then coloring the squares blue. Divide the class into smaller groups. In Chang's group, have all the children "draw" the circular shape with their finger, before proceeding with coloring them in. Do the same with squares. Encourage more appropriate peer modeling by dividing the class into groups of two. Each group completes the task together.

3. If this behavior is related to Health or Medical Problems,
   I would suggest the following:

   - Obtain an audiological evaluation, treatment and therapy, if indicated. Obtain a vision screening so that Chang can be prescribed corrective lenses, if indicated. Have Chang's health checked, and determine if sleeping or eating habits have changed recently. Work with both parents and Chang's pediatrician, if health problems are suspected.

4. If this behavior is related to Social-Emotional Problems,
   I would suggest the following:

   - Meet with Chang's parents and discuss related problems in the home and ways to help Chang resolve them. Meet with Chang individually to discuss expectations, e.g. provide encouragement to ask questions and get additional help. Offer praise for many aspects of classroom participation, e.g. asking questions, being attentive, being cooperative, finishing work neatly.

Workshop Activity 2

Example of Observed Behavior

Mr. Smith tells his class that they will spend the next half hour doing independent study. All the children, except Chang, an LEP Chinese-speaking child, take out books or papers and begin working. Chang only begins work when Mr. Smith suggests that he read a book.

What Might Be Factors In Chang's Observed Behavior?

1. Acculturation Factors:

2. Handicapping Conditions:

3. Health or Medical Problems:

4. Social-Emotional Problem:

What Activities Would You Propose To Help The Child?

1. If this behavior is related to Acculturation Factors, I would suggest the following:

2. If this behavior is related to Handicapping Conditions, I would suggest the following:

3. If this behavior is related to Health or Medical Problems, I would suggest the following:

4. If this behavior is related to Social-Emotional Problems, I would suggest the following:

Workshop Activity 3

Example of Observed Behavior

Chang was observed on several occasions to do slow, deliberate work when it comes to writing tasks in classroom. He seldom completes writing activities within the assigned period. On one occasion, the class was asked to print their first and last names five times. Chang made four attempts to write his name, crossed out his attempts with a big "x" when he made a mistake, and then started over again. After frequently referring to the lettering examples on the bulletin board, Chang finally wrote his name once within the time allotted for this activity.

What Might Be Factors In Chang's Observed Behavior?

1. Acculturation Factors

2. Handicapping Conditions

3. Health Or Medical Problems:

4. Social-Emotional Problem:

What Activities Would You Propose To Help The Child?

1. If this behavior is related to Acculturation Factors, I would suggest the following:

2. If this behavior is related to Handicapping Conditions I would suggest the following:

3 If this behavior is related to Health or Medical Problems, I would suggest the following:

4. If this behavior is related to Social-Emotional Problems, I would suggest the following:

Workshop Activity 4

Example of Observed Behavior

In her bilingual classroom, Ms. Wong noted that Chang, a new Chinese-speaking student in her 6th grade classroom, has failed to turn in completed homework assignments five times in a row. Ms. Wong spoke to Chang about the problem and noted that he seemed "ashamed." Ms. Wong reports that Chang is generally cooperative and completes assignments given in the classroom.

What Might Be Factors In Chang's Observed Behavior?

1. Acculturation Factors:
2. Handicapping Conditions:
3. Health or Medical Problems:
4. Social-Emotional Problem:

What Activities Would You Propose To Help The Child?

1. If this behavior is related to Acculturation Factors, I would suggest the following:

2. If this behavior is related to Handicapping Conditions, I would suggest the following:

3. If this behavior is related to Health or Medical Problems, I would suggest the following:

4. If this behavior is related to Social-Emotional Problems, I would suggest the following:

Workshop Activity 5

Example of Observed Behavior

Chang appears to be able to follow written instructions more easily than verbal instructions. The examiner noted that when the teacher gave simple verbal instructions to put their books away and take out pencils and paper, that Chang did not readily respond until he noted what other students were doing. Later, however, Chang was able to follow relatively more complex instructions written on the board without looking to peers for clues.

What Might Be Factors In Chang's Observed Behavior?

1. Acculturation Factors:

2. Handicapping Conditions:

3. Health or Medical Problems:

4. Social-Emotional Parobolem:

What Activities Would You Propose To Help The Child?

1. If this behavior is related to Acculturation Factors,
   I would suggest the following:

2. If this behavior is related to Handicapping Conditions,
   I would suggest the following:

3. If this behavior is related to Health or Medical Problems,
   I would suggest the following:

4. If this behavior is related to Social-Emotional Problems,
   I would suggest the following:

Workshop Activity 6

Example of Observed Behavior

Chang appears to have difficulties with tasks involving abstract concepts. During a classification activity, Chang was asked, "How are a dog and cat similar?" Chang was unable to respond, until the teacher repeated the question while pointing to pictures. Chang then responded, "They both have four legs." Similarly, during another activity teaching functions to objects, the teacher asked, "What do we do with a fork?" Chang responded, "Wash it."

What Might Be Factors In Chang's Observed Behavior?

1. Acculturation Factors:

2. Handicapping Conditions:

3. Health or Medical Problems:

4. Social-Emotional Problem:

What Activities Would You Propose To Help The Child?

1. If this behavior is related to Acculturation Factors,
   I would suggest the following:

2. If this behavior is related to Handicapping Conditions,
   I would suggest the following:

3. If this behavior is related to Health or Medical Problems ,
   I would suggest the following:

4. If this behavior is related to Social-Emotional Problems,
   I would suggest the following:

Workshop Activity 7

Example of Observed Behavior

Chang does not always assert himself with 3rd grade classmates. On one occasion, the examiner noted that a peer pushed Chang out of the lunch line and Chang did not object and retreated to the end of the line. His teachers report that Chang allows peers to take his personal belongings, such as pencils and lunch money — without protest. On another occasion, a group of older boys surrounded Chang and laughed at his choice of clothes. Chang did not respond verbally and he did not attempt to move away from the group, until a teacher intervened.

What Might Be Factors In Chang's Observed Behavior?

1. Acculturation Factors:
2. Handicapping Conditions:
3. Health or Medical Problems:
4. Social-Emotional Problem:

What Activities Would You Propose To Help The Child?

1. If this behavior is related to Acculturation Factors, I would suggest the following:

2. If this behavior is related to Handicapping Conditions, I would suggest the following:

3. If this behavior is related to Health or Medical Problems, I would suggest the following:

4. If this behavior is related to Social-Emotional Problems, I would suggest the following:

Workshop Activity 8

Example of Observed Behavior

The school nurse noted that 5 year old Chang seems to have a poor appetite. At lunchtime, he often picks at his food and refuses to drink his milk. Sometimes, he eats only a bite or two of his meal, usually because his teacher says he must before he can leave the lunch table. In spite of his poor eating habits, Chang does not appear unusually thin or malnourished.

What Might Be Factors In Chang's Observed Behavior?

1. Acculturation Factors:
2. Handicapping Conditions:
3. Health or Medical Problems:
4. Social-Emotional Problem:

What Activities Would You Propose To Help The Child?

1. If this behavior is related to Acculturation Factors, I would suggest the following:

2. If this behavior is related to Handicapping Conditions, I would suggest the following:

3. If this behavior is related to Health or Medical Problems, would suggest the following:

4. If this behavior is related to Social-Emotional Problems, I would suggest the following:

Workshop Activity 9

Example of Observed Behavior

Seven year old Chang often arrives at school tired, sleepy, irritable and lethargic. His bilingual teacher reports that Chang fell asleep three times, twice during a morning story time, another time on the lawn area at lunch recess. His teacher reports that his attention span during group activities seems to fluctuate from day to day.

What Might Be Factors In Chang's Observed Behavior?

1. Acculturation Factors:

2. Handicapping Conditions:

3. Health or Medical Problems:

4. Social-Emotional Problems:

What Activities Would You Propose To Help The Child?

1. If this behavior is related to Acculturation Factors, I would suggest the following:

2. If this behavior is related to Handicapping Conditions, I would suggest the following:

3. If this behavior is related to Health or Medical Problems, I would suggest the following:

4. If this behavior is related to Social-Emotional Problems, I would suggest the following:

The Psychoeducational Report

Interpreting and Summarizing Findings and Recommendations

4. Participants Will Have a Framework For Writing a Psychoeducational Report For The LEP Chinese-Speaking Child.

4.1 Participants will know four additional parameters to include in the psychoeducational report on a LEP Chinese-speaking child.

4.2 Participants will know three approaches that can help them interpret conflicting or confusing assessment information.

4.3 Participants will know three factors that should be considered when writing up recommendations for theLEP Chinese American child.

4.1 Parameters to Include In the Psychoeducational Report

We now come to the point of our assessment process when we will evaluate the information we have gathered and interpret these findings. To summarize, we have:

- Received reports from teacher, resource specialists, and outside consultants, if appropriate;
- Interviewed parents about the child's medical history, development milestones, educational experiences, current behavior, and parent concerns;
- Observed the child in the classroom individually; and
- Administered assessment instruments which were carefully selected as to purpose and usefulness in gathering data on the LEP Chinese-speaking child.
- Your report will be both a compilation and distillation of all this information.
- No doubt, as assessors, you're well acquainted with writing reports and recommendations based on your findings. You know what's generally included in an assessment report:

- Reason for referral
- Health and medical history (report and/or parent interview)
- Family background (parent interview)
- Educational history (parents, school records, teacher reports)
- Previous test results (yours and other assessors' reports)
- Summary of results based on assessments using instruments
- Summary of individual and classroom observations
- Summary of strengths and weaknesses by area
- Recommendations

In writing up your psychoeducational report on the Chinese child, you may also need to include additional parameters besides those we've just mentioned:

(A) Adaptations to assessment instruments;
(B) Documentation on the use of translators/interpreters
(C) Comparisons of functional skills, strengths and weaknesses in both Chinese and English language modalities;
(D) Recommendations that consider educational, bicultural and bilingual needs.

Let's look at each of these areas in more detail:

Adaptations of assessment instruments

As we've already discussed in this workshop, you probably will need to modify administration procedures when using assessment instruments with the LEP child. These modifications need to be documented in your report. You should include:

- Which instruments, tests, or sub-tests or items were translated
- Which test items were omitted or modified because of potential cultural bias or because items were unsuitable for translation
- Whether items were presented in both English and Chinese

Documentation on the use of interpreters

Your report should include:

- Name of the person who assisted you with translating
- Their position with the school program (e.g. bilingual teacher, bilingual consultant, certified interpreter, teacher's aide)
- The languages or dialects which the interpreter used

- The areas of the assessment in which translating assistance was provided.

Comparison of functional skills, strengths and weaknesses in both English and Chinese language modalities

In reviewing findings from all information areas, you should compare how the child functions in each language. If the child is indeed limited English proficient, you may find better performance in similar tasks administered in Chinese. Nonetheless, information about the child's abilities when presented with verbal instructions and tasks in English are important to note, since these are also an aspect of functioning that needs to be considered in formulating your recommendations.

Recommendations that consider educational, bilingual, and bicultural needs

As we've already discussed, additional factors may enter into your interpretation of the LEP child's behavior. These factors may include acculturation considerations. If, for example, the LEP Chinese-speaking child has both educational and bicultural needs, you will have to consider what learning approach can best help the child.

In formulating recommendations for classroom placement, you may have to look at a combination of bilingual education, special education and mainstreamed or regular classroom programs.

4.2 Approaches to interpretating conflicting and confusing assessment information

One of the most difficult parts of assessment is summarizing information that has been gathered from numerous sources and then integrating that data into a meaningful diagnosis. This process is even more difficult when we assess the LEP Chinese-speaking child. For one thing, we do not have guidelines for organizing how we will compare the Chinese-speaking child's relative strengths and weaknesses with respect to the two languages. If our preliminary assessment findings indicated that the child has learning deficits — and through parent interview and observation, we find that cultural factors also enter into the picture — does this decrease or increase the significance of our original findings? If our assessment tools are inadequate, how can we be sure that the information we've gathered with those tools is sufficient to draw any conclusions about the child? When we run into conflicting or confusing information, we may need to scrutinize both our data and procedures more rigorously. For example:

> What if the child performs significantly better on the translated version in tasks measuring cognitive skills — far better than what would have been expected on the basis of classroom performance and observation?
>
> Several factors may be involved.
>
> (1) Your translated portion of the test may have been technically unsound. The interpreter/translator's expression of items in Chinese may have simplified the level of complexity of each item.
>
> (2) An inexperienced interpreter may have inadvertently cued the child to the right answers.
>
> (3) The child does indeed have higher cognitive skills, that are obscured in a more functional classroom setting because of the child's difficulties in following directions in English.

To understand more fully what this information means, you need to:

- Review procedures used to administer the test(s):

  Example: One examiner used the LEP child's mother as an interpreter. The examiner later found out that the mother, anxious that her child "pass the test", had cued him to the right answer.

- You need to judge whether any of these modifications may have changed the level of complexity of the test or the scoring of the instrument.

  Example: One examiner eliminated items that were "culturally biased" and found that the remaining items were too few to provide a meaningful interpretation in that developmental area. If you've substituted items, you may have increased or decreased that item's level of difficulty. How, for example, does the child's ability to use chopsticks compare with the child's ability to use a spoon, fork, and knife respectively? They may be equivalent in self-help areas — if the child can use chopsticks to handle a variety of foods. They may not be equivalent in terms of perceptual or fine-motor skills.

- Determine what competencies the assessment item, test, or sub-test is probing and consider other factors that may affect the child's actual performance.

  Example: You find that a child has missed several items within his or her age range on a social maturity scale. In reviewing those missed items, you find that some items comprise experiences that the child has probably had no opportunity to experience, e.g. the use of skates, wagons, and sleds. Having more thorough information gathered through parent interviews can help you readily assess the likelihood that a child has had similar experiences that demonstrate that skill. Parents may inform you, for example, that the child plays with outdoor equipment more typical of the child's urban environment.

- Finally, you need to consider the full range of information that you've gathered and find evidence that supports or questions other findings.

  Example: Your report might find that the child has comparatively fewer social-personal skills relating to independence. You may then notice through your parent interview and observations notes, that the child is frequently accompanied to school by a grandmother or older sister. Furthermore, your notes on the family may indicate he is the youngest male child who seldom takes responsibility for his own actions.

As an assessor, your expertise is to then weigh all these factors and ultimately determine a meaningful diagnosis of the situation -- one that enables you to provide useful recommendations. Obviously, the more carefully you've prepared the assessment process — prior to beginning the assessment — the easier it will be to organize your data later.

4.3 Writing up recommendations

If you discover that the child's problems are an integration of several factors — cultural, medical, disabilities, or emotional — your recommendations will naturally address these factors as well.

In planning for the LEP Chinese American child with disabilities, you might address areas such as the following:

- The role of peers in the classroom

  Both bilingual and English-speaking peers can provide excellent models relating to classroom expectations, motivation, and language.

- The role of parents

    If there are conflicts in parental expectations, or if parents are unfamiliar with special education programs you might include recommendations to have parents observe in the classroom with a teacher or psychologist present and bilingual personnel, as needed, to explain what is being taught and what is expected of all children in the classroom.

- The role of bilingual education services

    The child may need a combination of mainstreamed bilingual services and special education. Your recommendations might look at areas that can best be served by placement in a bilingual classroom — both to take advantage of the child's strengths and to remediate educational weaknesses. For example, the bilingual classroom may enable the child to adjust more quickly to his/her new school environment. Placement in a bilingual classroom may also facilitate learning English language skills. At the same time, the child may also receive specific special education help through therapy services or participation in some special education programs.

Workshop Activity

[TRAINER NOTE]: We'll now review two sample assessment reports, one on a 6 year old child, the other on a 15 year old child. Each report briefly summarizes the assessment process. We'll divide into two groups. Each group will review a report, and then try to come up with a meaningful summaries and recommendations based on the information given. If you feel information is missing, you should also indicate where you would need to do further investigation.

Case Study 1: Raymond

Child's name: Raymond Chan (Note: this is not child's real name.)
Birthday: 2-28-77
Chronological Age: 6 years 3 months

Reason for referral

Raymond's teacher, Mrs. Betty Smith, initiated the referral for an assessment. Raymond, age 6 years 3 months, is completing his first year of school in the regular Kindergarten classroom. Mrs. Smith is concerned that Raymond is not progressing well in the regular classroom. An assessment is needed at this time to determine appropriate placement and services for Raymond for the coming school year.

Health factors

Vision and hearing were evaluated 8-82 and were found to be normal. Raymond is described as a healthy child who was full term at birth and who has had no reported major illnesses. Medical information was obtained through Raymond's parents. It was explained that all written medical reports are not in this country. Innoculations are current.

Interpreter/translator information

Mrs. Helen Woo, Bilingual Chinese Consultant for American School District, served as interpreter during the parent interview, one-to-one child interviews and during administration of educational and developmental tests. Translation was for English-Cantonese.

Family background

Raymond is the youngest of three children and the only boy born to Cantonese-speaking Chinese American parents now living in a low economic area in Chinatown, San Francisco. Mr. Chan's 70 year old mother also lives with the family and cares for Raymond in the afternoon until the parents return home from work. The Chan's arrived in the United States approximately 18 months ago from Hong Kong, and Raymond was enrolled in Kindergarten at the start of the next school year. Mr. Chan is a stock clerk in a grocery store and Mrs. Chan works part-time as a seamstress in Chinatown. Both parent speak, read and understand some English, although the entire interview was conducted in Cantonese.

Raymond's two sisters are 8 and 10 years of age. Both are enrolled in public schools and attend a church-sponsored Chinese Language School four nights a week. The Chans stated that next year Raymond will also attend Chinese School, in addition to public school. Parents report Cantonese is spoken in the home, although the two girls sometimes converse with each other in English.The Chans did not express any concerns about Raymond's development. They reported that developmental milestones seemed normal. Mrs. Chan reported that Raymond walked at 14 months and began using single words to name objects at 16 months. They reported — and the examiner observed — that Raymond was quite active and verbal at home. He alternated between watching a "Sesame Street" program and manipulating a wooden "choo-choo" train around an imaginary track. He responded to parent requests in Cantonese to turn down the TV set and to bring the examiner and interpreter some cookies and soft drinks.

Raymond reportedly has a few Chinese-speaking friends, both of whom are one to two years younger than Raymond.

Educational background

Prior to coming to the United States, Raymond had not attended any public schools or daycare programs. During infancy and early childhood, day care was provided by his grandmother and older siblings.

Except for quarterly achievement tests given in his Kindergarten program, Raymond has not been previously assessed. According to his teacher, Raymond's progress has been slow. He has only mastered rudimentary English language skills and seldom uses English voluntarily in the classroom or on the playground. He can name a few objects, respond to simple social questions posed by peers, but does not appear to have sufficient language skills to participate fully in classroom activities. He frequently does not respond when called upon in class.

Mrs. Smith also has some concerns about Raymond's development in other areas as well. For example, he has not yet learned names of colors and has difficulties in both reciting the alphabet and copying letters. She feels that motivation may be a factor, since Raymond is often unwilling to engage in unfamiliar activities. But she is also concerned that Raymond's slow rate of learning may also suggest problems other than language-related ones.

Classroom and individual observation

Classroom observations were made on two separate occasions, once in the morning and once in the afternoon. On both occasions, Raymond was observed to interact with Chinese-speaking classmates, speaking in Cantonese while they played with toy trucks and a model gas station. During a classroom activity, the examiner observed Raymond watching classmates participating in an oral exercise to practice letter sounds, but Raymond would not take his turn when the teacher called upon him. Later, during a coloring and lettering task, Raymond watched a classmate and copied what he did.

Although the Chan family lives only two blocks from the school, it was observed and confirmed by the teacher that Mr. Chan walks Raymond to school each day. In addition, his grandmother or 10 year old sister stops by each afternoon to walk him home. Raymond always greets his grandmother and sister enthusiastically by showing them pictures or other papers he had worked on that day in school. To observe Raymond's learning style, Raymond was later taken out of the classroom for small group interaction and observation with two classmates. The examiner explained that the children were to point to a red object in the room when they heard "I see something red," and to point to a blue object when they heard "I see something blue." At first, Raymond's friends had to translate and help him point out objects. After three trials, Raymond was able to independently point to objects by color without seeking help from peers. He occasionally used the words "red" and "blue" while pointing to objects.

One-to-one interview

Next, Raymond was observed during an individual interview session with Mrs. Woo conducting the interview, while the examiner observed. When the interpreter first asked Raymond questions in English, he kept his head down, avoided eye contact, and did not respond. The interpreter then asked the same questions in Cantonese, e.g. Where do you live? What is your teacher's name? At first, Raymond responded somewhat hesitantly in Cantonese. He later relaxed and responded easily to a variety of questions. Based on Raymond's generally observed skills in conversing easily with adults in Cantonese, his ability to relate several sequenced events when asked "What do you like to do at home?" ("Play with my friends, watch TV and eat candy."), his Chinese language skills appear to approximate his age of 6-3.

Test results

Bilingual Syntax Measure - Levels I and II: This test was administered as pre-test to determine Raymond's level of English functioning and ability to respond to other tests items presented in English. On the BSM, Raymond succeeded at Level I, but failed at Level II. His responses consisted primarily of single words and he spoke little English.

Bender Gestalt: The Bender was administered to assess Raymond's level of visual motor development and to assess the presence of possible neurological or emotional factors. An interpreter was used to provide both test instructions and administer portions of the test with the supervision of this examiner. Raymond's performance in the translated version of this test revealed he is functioning within the average range.

Leiter International Performance Scale: The Leiter was administered to assess strengths and weaknesses in several developmental areas. Since items on this test can be administered non-verbally, the interpreter/ translator was not used. Raymond's responses fell within the average range.

Wide Range Achievement Test and Pearbody Pictures Vocabulary Test: The WRAT and PPVT were administered to determine current skills essential for Raymond's functioning within the classroom setting. On the WRAT, Raymond demonstrated arithmetic achievement levels approximating grade level appropriate for age. When the PPVT was administered in English, Raymond scored at the 3-1 range, with scattered successes to the 4-5 year range. The test was then readministered with the help of the Cantonese interpreter. The item, "caboose" was eliminated from the sample, since this word translates as "end train," thus simplifying the level of complexity of this item. Results from administering the PPVT in Cantonese indicates Raymond's level of vocabulary recognition is age level appropriate.

Boehm Test of Basic Concepts

The Boehm was administered by the interpreter in Cantonese for purposes of assessing relative cognitive strengths and weaknesses. Raymond made no errors on time concepts; he erred once in the miscellaneous category, several times on spatial concepts, and six times on quantity concepts. While most of his responses fell within normal age ranges, it should be noted that Raymond's level of interest during these tasks began to wane toward the end of the session. While he remained generally cooperative, his loss of interest was suggested by his tendency to randomly guess at the correct response without carefully viewing the task before him.

Summary of strengths and weakness

Based on observations and findings from tests, Raymond appears to have average potential. In terms of actual functioning, he clearly performs at a superior level when items and tasks are presented in Cantonese, as was revealed in dual administrations of the PPVT.

Raymond's English vocabulary skills, on the other hand, have not progressed to a stage as to be adequate for classroom comprehension of directions and learning activities. To some degree, some lag in English vocabulary skills is expected with recent immigrant children. But of concern, is Raymond's apparent disinterest in learning new English skills. He does not participate willingly in group activities, although he seems more encouraged to do so when assisted by peers.

In part, Raymond's lack of motivation in learning English skills may relate to his current environmental "support." Raymond selectively seeks out peers who are Chinese-speaking and allows his friends to translate for him. His friends at home are younger Cantonese-speaking children. Raymond is cared for by his Cantonese-speaking grandmother and Cantonese is spoken in the home by other family members as well. In addition, Raymond will be attending Cantonese Language School next year.

In summary, then, this 6 year 3 month Chinese American boy appears to be functioning at least at age level in all areas, except verbal and receptive areas in English. His functional level of skills in English fluctuates between 3-2 and 4-5 in receptive language areas. By observation, his expressive language skills in English are somewhat lower and this may be mediated by the fact that he is unwilling to speak English in the classroom. Raymond seldom responds to questions directed to him with more than one word.

Workshop Activity

1. **Based on these findings, what recommendations would you make for placement?**

2. **If Raymond were to remain in this classroom, what recommendations would you make for him?**

    A. How can the teacher structure activities to help Raymond learn English?

    B. How can peers help Raymond learn classroom expectations?

    C. How can parents assist Raymond in the home?

Case Study 2: May

Name: "May Fong" (Note: this is not child's real name.)
Age: 15

Tests administered:

Bilingual Syntax Measure Levels I and II, Bender Gestalt, Leiter International Performance Scale, Wide Range Achievement Test, Wepman Auditory Discrimination Test, Selected Subtests of the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities, Tinloy Cantonese Auditory Discrimination Test.

Interpreter information:

Mrs. Chan, Bilingual Chinese Education teacher at Winston Junior High School interpreted in the Cantonese dialect during the parent/guardian and student interviews and meetings. Mrs. Chan also interpreted during administration of all tests.

Reason for referral:

May, age 15, has been in this country for two years. As compared to other immigrant Chinese children who have been here an approximately equivalent amount of time, she has failed to progress.

Interview:

May is living with an aunt and uncle. Her parents remained in Hong Kong when May and her elderly grandmother, who also lives in the same household, immigrated here. Although the background information obtained from the aunt, Mrs. Fong, was vague, May reportedly attended school in Hong Kong but could not progress beyond the primary grades. According to the aunt, May's health history has been unremarkable.

Observation:

When May and the aunt first arrived at the office, May appeared somewhat apprehensive. She did not make eye contact when spoken to. After a brief period she became quite sociable, talking freely about herself, her mother and her school experiences. She spoke in Chinese. The interpreter explained that May's manner of speaking seemed more adult than that of a teenager. Her expressions suggested that she has spent much of her life with older elderly people. Mrs. Fong confirmed that May had spent much of her time with her grandmother.

Test results:

Bilingual Syntax Measure Level I and Level II: These instruments were used as pretests to determine May's English language proficiency prior to administering the following selected test battery. Her performance here indicated that she was at the beginning of Level II, i.e., A Limited English Proficient student, who as yet does not use English as a vehicle of significant communication, but could use some common English words and phrases spontaneously. May could also repeat short sentences and questions.

Bender Gestalt: May's Bender figures showed problems with integration. Her performance here suggests some visual motor deficits.

Leiter International Performance Scale: May earned an age equivalent score of 10-3 on this non-verbal test. Her basal age was VI and her ceiling was at the XIV level. May's last two successful responses both required ability to deal with visual abstract concepts (Age XII task 4, classification of animals and Age XVI task 2, analogies designs). Thus on tasks which required no verbal or auditory skills but a great deal of visual conceptualizing, she was successful in some tasks which were almost at age level.

Wide Range Achievement Test: On the WRAT reading test, May could recognize only three words in the Level I group. She was able to do simple two place addition and one place subtraction problems. Her score here was at the grade 3.0 level. When asked to spell, she shook her head, indicating that she could not spell, or did not wish to attempt the spelling task, (reading and spelling tests were administered in English). She would write her name in English and although hesitantly, she wrote her Chinese name also.

Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities: The ITPA was not normed on LEP Chinese-speaking children, thus scores obtained during testing are considered invalid. Since May could not work with the English version of the ITPA, a profile of her strengths and weaknesses was obtained by adapting the tasks in Chinese. Although the ITPA is for children only up to age 10-3, May's level of functioning appeared sufficiently low so that this instrument was used to help gain a clearer picture of her learning style. Because of the language barrier and her inability to adapt to the English language, the Auditory Closure and Sound Blending subtests were omitted. Another reason for omitting those subtests was that Chinese words are monosyllabic and words such as "telephone" or "hospital" are made up of many syllables. Presenting these items in separate words does not provide sufficient clues for the subject to succeed. The Grammatic Closure Subtest was not attempted because of the absence of plural words in the Chinese language. For instance, May would have had to say "John belongs" and "two dress" to describe the possessive and the plural nouns "John's" and "dresses."

In terms of May's overall ITPA profile, her strengths seemed to be in her ability to understand auditorily presented stimuli, to verbally and manually express herself, and to visually recognize objects common to her environment (visual discrimination). Her score was at approximately midpoint, (in terms of her profile) in ability to grasp the meaning of visual symbols (Visual Reception Subtest). May's weaknesses were in her ability to grasp auditorily and visually presented stimuli which called for ability to abstract. Her ability for immediate recall of auditorily and visually presented material (difficulty in leaning new tasks) was also weak.

Wepman Auditory Discrimination Test: On the Wepman, May erred 20 times out of 40 word pairs presented. Her errors include 8 beginning sound word pairs, 10 ending sound word pairs, 1 middle sound word pair, and 1 same word pairs.

Tinloy Cantonese Auditory Discrimination Test: On the Tinloy Cantonese Test, May erred 3 times out of the 40 word pairs. Her errors included 2 beginning sound word pairs and 1 ending sound word pair.

May's performance on the Wepman and Tinloy tests suggests that she has problems recognizing the subtle differences of unfamiliar English word sounds. Her errors on the Tinloy test were minimal.

Summary of Findings:

May, age 15, has been in this country for two years. As compared to other immigrant Chinese children who have been here an equal amount of time, May has failed to progress at an equivalent rate in school, She could sight read only a few words and could not spell. Her language barrier, combined with learning disabilities (perhaps even resistance to adapting a new language) complicate the task of educating May.

Activity: What Recommendation Should Be Made?

What Alternatives Should Be Used?

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評估

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Publications Available

Prices Effective May 1, 1988

New! Assessment of Chinese Speaking Limited English Proficient Students With Special Needs, by Marion Tinloy, Amy Tan, and Brian Leung, 1987, 330 pp.	$ 25.00
New! Bilingual and Special Education: Procedural Manual for Program Administrators, 1987, 74 pp.	$ 10.00
Cooperative Activities for the Home: Parents Working with Teachers to Support Cooperative Learning by Audray Holm, Denise Schultz, Patricia Winget, and Linda Wurzback, 1987, 60 pp.	$ 5.00
Educators and Parents Working together to Develop Special Education Parent Support Groups, by Mary Ann Duganne, Marilyn Ferrara, and Tom Justice, 1986, 43 pp.	$ 8.50
Inservice on Inservice, by SERN 7, 1979, 80 pp.	$15.00
Integrating the Core Curriculum Through Cooperative Learning: Lesson Plans for Teachers, edited by Patricia Winget, 1987, 212 pp.	$22.50
Microcomputers: Critical Consumers and Users Guide, by Mary Britt Vasques and Steve Johnson, 1986, 158 pp.	$15.00
Self-Esteem: A Resource Notebook, by Dianna Zapata and Joanne Cohn, 1986, 130 pp.	$10.00
New! Software Programs and the Learning Disabled Student: The Second Report, by Anne Graves Bruce Ostertag, 1988, 17 pp.	$ 4.00
Special Education Parent Resources Guide, by Lynn Carlisle and Beverly Doyle, 1987, 195 pp.	$15.00
Revised Student Study Teams: A Resource Manual for Trainers and Implementors by Marcie Radius and Pat Lesniak, 1987, 297 pp.	shrink-wrapped: $20.00 with binder: $22.50
Student Study Team Banners, English or Spanish.	$12.00
Tutoring Your Child, by Joanne Cohn, n.d., 22 pp.	$ 5.50
Working With Adults With Exceptional Needs, by Lynn Carlisle and Trudy Connelly, 1985, 43 pp.	$ 5.50

Handouts

評估

Factors of Cultural Diversity

1. COUNTRY AND REGION ORIGIN

Chinese American families may have come from Taiwan, Hong Kong, the People's Republic of China (PRC), Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, North Vietnam or South Vietnam, to name some of the more common countries of origin. Within countries, such as the PRC, you will find differences among regions. Cultural differences exist between those from Shanghai and those from Canton, for example.

2. LANGUAGE BACKGROUND

Chinese is a language of many dialects, many of which are not mutually intelligible. In California, the main dialects spoken within Chinese American communities are Cantonese and Toishanese — which are both dialects of the Guantung province — and Mandarin and its sub-dialects. With recent increased immigration from other countries, you may work with Chinese American families representing many different Chinese dialects.

3. SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUND

Socioeconomic factors also determine cultural values. As a more obvious example, an upper income family from a very cosmopolitan city with European influence, such as Hong Kong or Singapore will likely be culturally different from a lower-income family originating from a rural region in the North Vietnam.

4. EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

You will want to determine the educational level and experience of both the parents and the child. We will discuss this further in our section on "School Adjustment."

5. IMMIGRATION HISTORY

You need to understand when the family arrived and the reasons for immigrating. Was it to join other family members? To seek better job-earning possibilities? To seek political refuge? To take advantage of educational opportunities? Bear in mind that many Vietnamese refugees are first routed to resettlement countries, such as Hong Kong, the Philippines, and Thailand, prior to coming to the United States. As an example, the Chinese parents may have cultural values of the North Vietnamese village they resided in. They may have fled to Thailand to wait for permission to immigrate to the United States. In the meantime, their child or children may have been born and raised in Thailand.

The Hierarchy Within a Traditional Chinese Family

1. **GRANDPARENTS:** Accorded the most respect and authority; in more traditional families, this generation lives with their son's family; the daughter-in-law must respect her mother-in-law's wishes, even in household and child-rearing matters.

2. **FATHER:** Has responsibility for all family members; has absolute respect from children; has more authority than mother.

3. **MOTHER:** Must give deference to husband and grandparents; has responsibility for upbringing of children, and particularly for instilling proper social values.

4. **OLDEST SON:** Also called "big brother" by other siblings; defers to parents; has responsibility for care and behavior of youngest siblings; as a son, also has heavy responsibility for setting good examples; may be scolded if younger siblings go astray; may be expected to make sacrifices for the sake of younger siblings.

5. **MIDDLE DAUGHTER:** Also called "little sister" by older brother, and "big sister" by younger siblings; defers to parents and older brother. Shares in responsibility of younger siblings; as a girl, also has responsibilities for routine care such as dressing, feeding, and safety of younger siblings.

6. **YOUNGEST SON:** Also known as "little brother," defers to parents and older siblings; responsibility is to listen, obey and do well by following ex amples set by older siblings; may be chastised for not following advice of older siblings.

Clues to Understanding Individual Family Values

You might be able to get a sense of how traditional or non-traditional the family's values are by gathering more information in these three areas:

Which family member(s) are involved in making decisions about the handicapped child?

QUESTION: If you find out that the grandmother makes many decisions about the care of the child, what is that clue of?

Which family member(s) have an active role in the care and guidance of the child?

QUESTION: If you find out that both the father and mother share in the care and guidance of the handicapped child, what is that a clue of?

What responsibilities are placed on both siblings and the handicapped child?

QUESTION: If you find the handicapped child has few or no responsibilities, and that an older brother and sister are responsible for the handicapped child's actions, what is that a clue of?

Similarities in Coping Strategies Between Traditional and Westernized Parents

Handicaps Representing Divine Punishment

The child's handicapping condition may be perceived as direct punishment by the gods for transgressions committed by either the parents or ancestors. Parents who hold this view may react in one of two ways. First, they may feel that nothing can be done — this is their "karma." Or they may feel that an appeal to the gods might "cure" the child. In the latter case, the parents may employ religious customs to amend their past wrong-doing. What parents actually do depends on their religious beliefs and the perceived wrong-doing.

How might this be similar to Anglo American parents' reactions upon first learning their child has a handicapping condition?

1. ____________________

2. ____________________

3. ____________________

4. ____________________

5. ____________________

Handicaps as the Result of Demonic Possession

Another traditional belief is that evil spirits, such as a demon, occupy the child's soul. While this belief is seldom encountered among less traditional parents or among Anglo American parents, those who hold such beliefs may seek "cure" by prayers or meditation, or they may seek help from a higher source, such as a monk or priest, who they feel may be able to drive the demon out of the body.

How is this similar to beliefs that Anglo American parents may have?

1. ____

2. ____

3. ____

Handicaps as Related to Some Form of Behavior During Pregnancy

Some Chinese American families may attribute a birth defect or handicapping condition as the result of the parents' behavior during the pregnancy. Often the mother is seen as the parent at fault. For example, one mother, a seamstress, whose child was born with a cleft palate, blamed her constant use of scissors during pregnancy as the source of the child's birth defect. In another family, the child's grandparents blamed the mother's frequent outburst of temper as the reason why the child was physically disabled.

With less traditional Chinese American families, you may find health or dietary indiscretions cited as a cause for the child's disabilities.

How is this response similar to those of Anglo American parents?

1. ____________________

2. ____________________

3. ____________________

Handicaps Due to Physiological Imbalance

Traditional Chinese medicine views mental and physical health as a balance of the forces of yin and yang. Parents who follow these traditional medical views may attempt to see the child's disability as an imbalance of these forces. They may seek a cure in the form of acupuncture or herbal medicine.

How is this similar to Anglo American parents' beliefs in medical causes of handicapping conditions?

1. ______________________________

2. ______________________________

Handicaps Viewed as Laziness

If the child has a mild handicap — especially one that is not discovered until the child is older — some parents mistake the source of the child's problem as one of laziness. To correct the "laziness" problem, parents may have the child take on extra homework or put the child on a strict tutorial schedule until specific skills are mastered.

How is this response similar to that of some Anglo American parents?

1. ____________________

2. ____________________

3. ____________________

Culture Module
Objective 2/Outcome 2.2
Handout 5

A Comparison of Parental Expectations: Traditional vs. Non-Traditional

What is the typical American (Westerized) perspective in each of these areas of conflict between parents and children?

Traditional Chinese American View	American Western View
Children are extensions of parents.	
The family makes decisions for the child.	
Older children are responsible for their siblings' actions.	
Parents ask, "What can you do to help me?"	
Children should remain dependent on the family for most needs.	
Children should submit to structure.	
Children should respond to and be sensitive to the environment.	
Young children do not have well-formed feelings or individual needs.	
Praise is not given for a job well done.	
Children should not express anger, frustration or contempt.	
Punishment for discipline problems include shaming, withdrawing of love.	
Questioning adults or asking why is not accepted.	
Parents provide authority.	

Criteria for Selecting Interpreters

Ideally, your school district should arrange for a pool of interpreters, either using personnel with bilingual skills or hiring outside interpreters. In either case, your interpreters should have qualifications other than bilingual skills. In designing your pool of interpreters, you might consider the following:

1) Languages and Dialects Spoken

As we've already pointed out, there are many Chinese dialects. Your pool then might include interpreters who are familiar with many of the common dialects: Cantonese, Mandarin, and Toishanese, for example. The "most common" dialects might vary depending on where your school district is located. In San Francisco, for example, various Cantonese dialects are more commonly heard as opposed to Mandarin. To more accurately determine which interpreters are needed, you might informally poll your Chinese American parents who have limited English proficiency.

2) Ability to maintain confidentiality of information

Your interpreters should be persons who understand the need for confidentiality. Ideally, interpreters are personnel from your school district who are familiar with and obligated to follow the school district's confidentiality procedures and policies. In using outside interpreters, you need to provide training and stipulations in the contract to ensure that confidentiality of information is maintained.

3) Familiarity with nature and purpose of meeting

Your interpreters need to be briefed on topics that will be discussed. You might also provide a list of terms that will be used, and determine how familiar the interpreter is with these words and expressions. For example, an inexperienced interpreter may inappropriately translate technical terms, such as "mentally retarded" as "crazy."

4) Professionalism

Since your interpreter will be "doing the talking for you," you want to make sure he or she will carry off the proper tone and professionalism of the meeting. Appropriate dress, manner of addressing parents, and sensitivity in discussing issues are also qualities you should look for in interpreters.

5) Understanding of what "translating" means

Translating does not simply mean a literal "word for word" translation of what is being said. Some words in English do not have an equivalent in Chinese. The interpreter needs to be aware of the intent you wish to communicate. At the same time, you need to inform the interpreter of the content that needs to be expressed. In setting guidelines, you should explain the danger of having interpreters "interpret" the content from their own perspective.

If your school district does not have Chinese-speaking psychologists and educators, it should provide adequate training and an orientation as to how interviews should be conducted. In essence, the components of that training should minimally cover the areas we have just talked about. Ideally, the training should include a bilingual educator who can provide a "dry run" of an interview and who can assess each interpreter's capabilities in translating sensitive and confidential information in both English and Chinese.

Preparing for an Interview Using an Interpreter

Let's suppose that you will be conducting a parent meeting in which the services of an interpreter are needed. What points should you keep in mind to make sure the meeting is a successful one?

Here are a few ways you can prepare for the interview:

Establish a protocol for translating.

- Introduce yourself and the interpreter, the role you have in the interview, the role the interpreter has, and the role that parents have.
- Address your remarks and questions directly to parents. Even though you are using an interpreter, you want to communicate with the parents, not the interpreter. When parents ask questions, look towards them and listen. Remember, much is communicated non-verbally.
- Limit your remarks and questions to a few sentences between translations. This reduces the likelihood that interpreters will paraphrase inaccurately or omit important information.

Brief interpreters on the purpose of the meeting.

- Note sensitive areas that will be discussed.
- Ask interpreters if they are familiar with terms you will be discussing, such as "classroom observation," "assessment," "psychologist," "handicapping conditions," "learning disabilities," and any other terms that will be used during the meeting.
- Brief interpreters on any written documents that will be shown during the meeting, so they can easily explain what they are.

Provide interpreters with a written agenda of what will be covered.

- Include terms that will be used.
- Include important points that will be made.

Learn a few simple Chinese phrases.

- Prior to the meeting, ask the interpreter to teach you a few common social phrases such as "Pleased to meet you," "Until we meet again," and "Thanks for coming." Your attempt to use the parents' language — even if your pronunciation is imperfect — will go a long way toward quickly establishing rapport.

Introduction to Terms

Before we discuss some of the key issues of assessing language skills in LEP Chinese American Children, let's first look at some of the terms we will be using frequently in this workshop. These are not formal definitions, but simply working terms.

Language

In this workshop, we will be discussing language in two ways: First to refer to a specific language group, such as Chinese, or English. Second, we will also be talking about the child's language systems as a means of communication, comprehension, and functional language use. We will be discussing problems of assessing the child's language system when two language groups are involved.

Limited English Proficient

In this workshop, when we refer a Chinese American child as being limited English proficient (LEP), we will be referring to children whose native language is Chinese and who have comparatively fewer developed language skills in English. Limited English proficiency in and of itself will not refer to a language disorder.

Bilingual

In a later part of this workshop we will be discussing in greater depth what we mean by bilingualism. But as a working definition, bilingual will describe persons who have skills in two languages, although these may not be equal for both languages.

Language or Speech Disorders

We will use these terms to refer to problems in the child's language system. Language or communicative disorders do not refer to the child's limited English proficiency. Examples of speech and language disorders include delayed language, dyspraxia, stuttering, and deficits that are secondary to mental retardation, hearing loss, emotional disturbances, or other developmental problems.

Partial List of Characteristics of Limited English Proficiency

Difficulties in English Comprehension

- Does not fully understand verbal directions given in English.
- Is not able to recognize names of objects commonly understood by children of that age.
- Does not attend well to lengthy activities conducted in English, e.g. listening to a story.

Difficulties in English Expression

- Has limited vocabulary.
- Speaks in short phrases.
- Uses incorrect language forms, e.g. double negatives, or lack of plural forms.
- Is unable to respond to more complex questions, e.g. "How should we dress on a rainy day?"
- Does not initiate questions or participate in group discussions.
- Can recognize names of objects in English but cannot always use words spontaneously to name these same objects.

Difficulties in English Pronunciation

- Has many false starts and hesitations when speaking.
- Use of English words is largely limited to largely single syllable words.
- Has difficulties pronouncing consonant clusters, as in the words break, black, crazy, task, start.
- Pronunciation patterns include many sound substitutions, e.g. /s/ for /th/ as in "sing" for "thing;" /l/ for /r/ as in "lice" for "rice."

Characteristics of Speech and Language Disorders

Language Delay or Deficits Due to Auditory Processing Problems

1) What might be some characteristics of this problem?

2) Which of these characteristics are similar to those of limited English proficiency?

Expressive Language Delay

1) What might be some characteristics of this problem?

2) Which of these characteristics are similar to those of limited English proficiency?

Articulation Problems Due to Speech-Motor Deficits

1) What might be some characteristics of this problem?

2) Which of these characteristics are similar to those of limited English proficiency?

Language Delay Due to Mild Mental Retardation

1) What might be some characteristics of this problem.

2) Which of these characteristics are similar to those of limited English proficiency?

Selecting Instruments for Assessment of Language Skills in LEP/NEP Chinese-Speaking Children

Brief Case Presentation

A 7-year old LEP Chinese-speaking child is referred for severe speech and language delay. Assume for the purposes of this activity that you have little information about this child, that is, no known diagnosis, no other known primary or secondary disability. Also assume parents are non-English speaking. Finally, we will also assume you have access to an interpreter.

Quickly review the list on the following page of assessment procedures available to you and determine areas in which you would be able to obtain adequate information, as well as areas that present assessment difficulties for you. If you feel you are not able to adequately assess a child in that area, indicate, if possible, whether the problem in assessment is related to *translation* or *cultural* factors, e.g. interpreter needed; tasks not translatable; items are culturally biased.

Assessment Instrument Methods

NOTE: This is not an inclusive list of assessment instrument methods. You may also wish to suggest others that can be used.

Obtainable Assessment Method	**Problem**
Pure tone threshold testing	
Auditory/Speechdiscrimination task	
Sound localization	
Impedance audiometry	
Brain stem audiometry	
Articulation task by imitation	
Spontaneous speech-language sample	
Articulation feature analysis	
Picture vocabulary test	
Cognitive language tasks	
Receptive language tasks	
Expressive language tasks	
Observation	
Developmental history	
Medical/health history	
Family history	
Educational history	
Social history	
Oral mechanism evaluation (oral-motor movements)	

Comparing Functional Language Skills in Chinese and English

Informal Observation

If possible, the child should be observed in both classroom and social environments. Assessors should observe for the following, where applicable:

In the classroom:	**Chinese**	**English**
• Ability to follow routine directions		
• Ability to follow instructional material		
• Attention to, or reliance on, non-verbal cues		
• Participation in classroom activities when requested		
• Spontaneous participation in activities (which ones?)		
• Performance in non-verbal areas, e.g. art, play		
• Inclusion in classroom activities by peers		
• Type of language use		
• Examples of language use		

(NOTE: With the assistance of an interpreter, similar observations can be made if the child also attends a Chinese language school or is in a bilingual classroom.)

On the playground	**Chinese**	**English**
• Language of playmates, language spoken with playmates		
• Types of play child engages in, e.g. group or isolated play		
• How language enables child to respond		

(NOTE: Interaction with peers can reveal much about which language the child feels most comfortable with—and how motivated the child might be to develop better English proficiency.)

At home	**Chinese**	**English**
• Language spoken by parents		
• Language spoken by the child to parents		
• Language spoken by the child to siblings and vice versa		
• Language spoken by child on the phone		
• Language on TV or radio programs the family listens to		
• Language of other materials in the home, e.g. newspapers		

(NOTE: While observations in the home may be quite useful, it may not always be possible to enter the child's home for this purpose. If this is the case, you might gather information about these same areas through a parent interview. The phrasing of your questions will be important and should not unintentionally convey that English usage in the home is preferred.)

Comparing Functional Language Skills in Chinese and English

Informal Language Screening

In contrast to more "formal" assessments, you don't need to use specific instruments in this type of screening. You do need to plan how you will gather information to make the session as constructive as possible—especially if you are using an interpreter.

Unless you are fluent in both Chinese and English, an interpreter needs to be involved. You should also tape-record the session, so that the information can be transcribed, reviewed with the interpreter and analyzed. (Of course, permission for tape-recording must be obtained first.)

Spontaneous language use

Your protocol for eliciting information in this area might be similar to that which you use with any child. But you will need to elicit language samples in both Chinese and English and in the same context. Here are some basic suggestions:

- You might request that the child guide you and the interpreter through his or her classroom, to talk about materials, where various peers sit, and what activities take place in different areas of the room. The child can alternately talk about these areas with you and the interpreter in both English and Chinese.
- You might select a picture book without words and ask the child to tell a story, encouraging the child to elaborate on details. On the other hand, if the child has learned Chinese and English in different context (Chinese with family and neighbors and English at school, for example) you may want to elicit speech samples for the two languages in different contexts. You may want to elicit an English sample in the context of the classroom and a Chinese sample in the context of conversation about everyday matters in the home, stories and rhymes taught in the home, etc.

By sampling spontaneous language use, you should be able to gather information revealing characteristics of vocabulary use, sentence complexity, and the ease in which the child uses both languages.

Observations for Accompanying Non-Language Clues

Additionally, during these sessions, you will want to observe both *metalinguistic* and *extralinguistic* cues. Metalinguistic cues may include features that signal the child's awareness of difficulties in using English or Chinese.

For example, self-corrections and self-editing, that is, comments such as "that's not right," can cue the examiner as to the child's ease with the language being used.

Extralinguistic cues, such as facial or gestural expressions, may also tell you whether the child's use of English presents a struggle. If you do not observe these extralinguistic characteristics in the child's use of Chinese, you might conclude that "language struggle" stems more from proficiency difficulties.

Vocabulary Sampling

In comparing language skills in Chinese and English, you should look for examples that characterize the level of vocabulary used, as well as specific vocabulary categories that have been acquired, e.g. nouns, verbs, locatives, and modifiers.

In probing vocabulary skills in both languages, bear in mind that some terms may be language/ dialect or culture-specific. Terms for eating utensils may only be known in Chinese and for items more typical of those used in the home, e.g. bowls, chopsticks. On the other hand, school materials or equipment may have only been learned in English through school experiences.

Assessors should elicit names for vocabulary items separately for Chinese and English—and as naturally as possible. For example, if you ask the child to name objects in English in response to the question, "What's this?" the same question formatshould be used to elicit responses in Chinese. That is, you should avoid obtaining an English responses in one way, and then seeking its Chinese counterpart by asking the child, "How do you say that in Chinese?" The latter approach may be more indicative of translation abilities, rather than language skills.

Sentence Repetition

Another method for determining functional language skills in both Chinese and English involves sentence repetition of both simple and increasingly complex, grammatical and syntactical structures.

Generally children imitate only those sentences that are equivalent to already acquired structures within their language system. Thus, a child would not be able to imitate a sentence that is more complex than what she/he ordinarily produces in spontaneous speech.

One big caution on interpreting results based on imitation tasks: some children with auditory processing problems may not be able to imitate longer utterances. Therefore, it is difficult to interpret the nature of a child's expressive language deficits from the results of repetition tasks alone.

Parent Interview

In interviewing both parents, care must be taken to explain the nature of the interview. For example, when being asked about the extent of Chinese and English used in the home, parents may feel their sense of responsibility as parents is being questioned or judged,(i.e., the less English used in the home, the less responsible the parent has been in educating the child). It may be more efficacious to conduct the interview process as a discussion, rather than a rigid series of questions and short answers. You may which to ask how both parents and children communicate in the home. For example:

- **Can the child communicate well with grandparents?**
- **What Chinese stories does the child know?**
- **Do parents feel the child's Chinese language skills are where they should be for his or her age?**
- **Does the child have Chinese reading and writing skills?**

Checklist for Modifying Speech and Language Assessment Instruments

Types of Assessment

Auditory/Speech Discrimination Task

Gross auditory discrimination tasks may include discrimination between noisemakers, e.g. pointing to the picture of a bell upon hearing a bell ring, and pointing to a picture of a telephone upon hearing a telephone ring. Keep in mind that some noises in our environment are culturally-specific. Fire engines and doorbells, for example, may be foreign to the Chinese child raised in a small rural village. You will need to consider each situation individually. Reviewing the child's background information is helpful in this regard.

Speech discrimination tasks may include differentiation between like-sounding word pairs which requires discrimination of consonant phonemes or vowels, e.g. "cat/can." Finer discrimination skills are required for perceiving differences between similar phoneme classes, as in the sounds /p/ and /b/ as differentiated in the words "cap/cab."

Keep in mind that speech discrimination using word pair contrasts also require vocabulary comprehension skills as well, and some words may be culturally-loaded or unfamiliar. Furthermore, translating a word pair into Chinese is not appropriate, as this will not result in a word pair that is appropriate for speech discrimination purposes. These tasks may be useful in determining the Chinese child's level of speech discrimination in English, but not for overall evaluation of auditory discrimination skills. Results will not reveal hearing loss nor developmental maturity of the child's speech perception skills in general.

You might try to devise a similar word-pair contrast test by combining like-sounding Chinese pairs. However, without having these "homemade" instruments normed, you would be hard-pressed to come up with any meaningful results.

Sound Localization

Sound localization tasks may include having the child turn toward sounds as they are produced. These include environmental sounds, speech sounds, and finer auditory cues testing a range of auditory frequencies. Task explanations should be explained in the child's language with appropriate demonstration and reinforcement.

Impedance Audiometry and Brain Stem Audiometry

Testing requiring physiologic and neurological responses will probably not involve difficulties with a non-English-speaking child. Examiners, however, may want to consider parental attitudes toward testing that may reveal a hearing loss. Hearing aids in mainland China, for example, are rarely used, whereas acupuncture followed with lip-reading training are the preferred courses of treatment.

Articulation Tasks by Imitation

Imitation tasks generally probe skills already developed within the child's language or speech system. Imitation may give the assessor some information about sounds within the English language system which the child has acquired as a second language. Imitation of English words may also provide information about sound errors based on the child's Chinese speech sound system. Imitation tasks in English, on the otherhand may not be an accurate means of pinpointing actual articulatory or speech disorders. For this purpose, the examiner needs to gather information about the child's dominant language system–Chinese–in discerning the nature of production errors.

Spontaneous Speech and Language Sample

As with all children, spontaneous speech sampling may be more informative than imitation tasks or responses elicited through question-and-answer situations. Assessors can elicit spontaneous speech and language samples through social conversation, observation of natural peer and family interactions, or by asking the child to retell a story or event.

Spontaneous speech sampling may indicate the child's mastery of English sounds, but without additional information about the child's use of Chinese in natural discourse, data may not be sufficient for evaluating potential speech and/or language disorders. Some disorders may be apparent cross-linguistically, including stuttering, hypernasality, or severe oral-motor deficits which result in distorted speech patterns.

Cognitive Language Tasks

Psycholinguistic tasks may probe cognitive language domains of children and are useful in looking at strengths and weaknesses in related parameters. Assessors must be cautious in using items which assume a level of English and American cultural knowledge. For example, items which ask children to repeat words may require a certain familiarity with words on a semantic, syntactic, and phonologic level.

Tasks which require children to look for semantic absurdities also require prior knowledge of items, and these items may be culturally-loaded. Consequently, test items may not be as valuable for probing intrinsic cognitive language skills of organization, perception, and association.

Ideally, a team of assessors, including someone familiar with both the Chinese and English languages and cultures, will participate in the evaluation. If interpreter services are required, the interpreter should also be experienced in the parameters and approaches of assessment. An unskilled interpreter may not be sophisticated in testing parameters, and may interpret items which bias the assessment. As with English opposites, an alternate way to express the opposite of "pretty" is "not pretty," and accepting this response may defeat the purpose of task which seeks to differentiate more subtle semantic elements contained in lexical items.

Receptive Language Tasks

Assessment of receptive language areas often requires both verbal and non-verbal responses to verbally administered test items. Assessment may probe vocabulary acquisition, and language organization, or conceptual skills (e.g. opposites, categories, numerical concepts, spatial directions). Obviously, a test administered in English to an LEP child will provide limited information.

Translated assessments may also contain limitations, which depend on the assessment approach used. For example, some assessments may select pictorial representations of common objects associated with words, and these pictures may be culturally-loaded. As an example, we may ask a child to differentiate opposite concepts such as "fast/slow" and these may be pictorially represented by a rabbit and a turtle, both of which are animals frequently found in American folklore. We need to ensure that these animals are also a part of the Chinese LEP child's experiences in using them for opposites recognition. An examiner or interpreter who is familiar with Chinese cultural experiences may be helpful in this regard.

Other receptive language "red flags" include assessment approaches which use a particular syntactic form that cannot be used naturally in the child's primary language. For example, we may use a form such as "Show me dog/Show me dogs," in which the plural distinctions are carried within the phonologic form of plural -s attached to the noun. Chinese does not contain plural morphemes as such. As assessors, then we need to be aware of the "bottomline," so to speak, in what we are testing. Chinese children also develop plural concepts, but these are acquired through learning other semantic and syntactic markers that may not be readily translatable.

As one alternate approach, assessors may first review items which the Chinese LEP child fails, evaluate those assessment items individually for bias or appropriateness, and then discuss ways in which these areas might be more accurately assessed (e.g. through translation equivalents, or through altering the assessment proceudres). Items may be found unacceptable for the following:

- **Form of elicitation**
- **Pictorial or object representation**
- **Level of cultural experience required**
- **Form of response required**

In altering assessment items, we concurrently alter the assessment process. Nonetheless, alterations may reveal informative aspects of the child's language functioning. Alterations require our questioning the following:

- **Is the item of equivalent complexity in its translated form?**
- **If other representations are used, are they of equivalent complexity?**
- **Is the form of response that is required of equivalent complexity?**

We need to avoid translated assessments that both increase or decrease level of difficulty, since our assessment purpose is not to simply have the child pass each item. For example, we may have an American English assessment item which requires the child to sort objects according to categories. We may have a miscellaneous group of objects or pictures which can be sorted into "items used for eating," "items which are eaten," "items which transport," etc. If we adjust some of these items, for example, eliminating kitchen utensils that may not be familiar to a Chinese child, we need to replace those items with an equal number of items which will require a similar level of language organization.

Expressive language tasks

Not all receptive language require verbal response, expressive language tasks require a level of verbal understanding and verbal responses. If the former is lacking, the latter will also be affected. Expressive language tasks may be useful in second language proficiency testing; but, by themselves, will not reveal linguistic disorders. To evaluate for linguistic deficits, we need to look at each item on the assessment and evaluate what the item is attempting to probe, e.g. mean length of utterance; acquisition of syntactic structures (such as question formation and negation); or use of morphemes (plurals, use of specific semantic forms such as reflexives). We then need to find alternate ways to probe similar areas in the child's primary language. Familiarity with Chinese language characteristics is crucial, since translations may not be equivalent in complexity. The non-Chinese-speaking assessor will need the assistance of an interpreter with some knowledge of testing parameters.

In assessing for possible linguistic deficits then, both languages need to be evaluated. With a younger child, it would also be helpful to look at the child's performance longitudinally. For example, we may find that the child's mean length utterance does not change over a year's time, at a stage when MLU increases perceptibly. This may signal difficulties in language development. We may find that the child does not express negation correctly in Chinese. If we are using a Chinese interpreter, we need to ask the interpreter about his/her perceptions of the child's productions. We might then compare the child's perceived productions with the "correct" forms provided by the interpreter.

Our questions and instructions to the interpreter must also be carefully directed. For example, in colloquial English "Who did you give the book to?" is perfectly acceptable and certainly not linguistically deviant. The English standardized form "To whom did you give the book?" may be infrequently used in conversation, even among adults. Sentences may also be translated with a variety of meaning equivalents. Consider the question "Where did the dog go?" We can use any number of ways to express the same question, e.g. "Which direction did the dog take?" "In which direction did the dog go?" "Where has the dog gone?" etc. Thus, in our use of interpreters, we need to be cautious about assuming that translations will be equivalent. We may want to ask the interpreter whether there are other ways to express the same thing and whether one form is more difficult than another.

Observation

Both informal and structured observation can reveal much about natural language functioning — language in context. Children, for example, who have language difficulties often exhibit characteristics (e.g. gesturing, frustration, innovative communication strategies) which give assessors important clues as to the presence of a communicative disorder. We may want to observe how well the child communicates with English-speaking and Chinese-speaking peers and adults. Our observations can also include comparative studies. For example, you may have two Chinese-speaking children of similar ages. While all children show individual differences in performance, you may gain insights about a particular child's communicative functioning in natural situations. The language disordered child, for example, may show limited ability to auditorily attend for long periods of time.

Developmental history

This provides us with information about the child's overall development in different areas from birth. Most of this information may be obtained through a combination of parent interview and school reports or evaluations which may have been performed.

If parents are Chinese-speaking, we may need to provide interpreter services. Since cultural considerations enter into the interviewing process, assessors would do well to become familiar with techniques that ensure parents understand the nature of the interview and the questions being asked (refer to module on interviewing techniques.)

Medical/Health history

Medical and health histories form an important part of the total picture of the child. Although medical histories tend to be more extensive with children with known disabilities, such as Down's Syndrome, information regarding prenatal and neonatal history is important to obtain for all children. Language disabilities affect a higher percentage of children, for example, who presented difficulties such as low birth weight and hypocalcemia at birth. It may be difficult for assessors to obtain medical histories performed in other countries. In these cases, parent interview may be required. In fact, parents may refer to early developmental difficulties as health-related problems. Assessors may want to discuss whether these health-related problems made it difficult for the child to walk and talk.

Family History

Family history, usually obtained through medical records and parent interview, may provide assessors information concerning related congenital problems in other family members. Cultural considerations certainly enter into such discussions. Parents, and particularly, older generation Chinese family members, may be sensitive to revealing details that may not reflect well on the family lineage. Assessors, then, may want to avoid the use of specific disabilities, such as mental retardation, initially and discuss health-related problems present in other family members. Questions which ask to compare sibling development may be useful, although some parents may see significant differences among siblings as normal.

Educational History

Children from other countries may have been exposed to different educational systems, approaches and achievement objectives. For example, children may begin school at age seven and may continue through grade nine. Assessors may also see children from more rural communities who have not attended school. If the child is more severely disabled, it may well be that the child has not been involved in a program; some countries do not offer publicity-funded special services or programs.

If the child has been enrolled in an educational program, assessors will want to gather information about the program itself. This may give you as the assessor an understanding of parent values toward the child's educational difficulties or disability. For people in mainland China, hearing impaired children tend to be mainstreamed in the regular classroom and are given additional instruction in lip-reading and articulatory phonetics. Children with profound hearing losses may have attended special programs with an emphasis on the "oral tradition," that is, one which requires the child to learn to lip-read and speak, as opposed to using sign language. Assessors of hearing impaired children should keep in mind that sign language in other countries differs significantly from American Sign Language; and thus, ASL would be equivalent to a foreign language.

Psychoeducation Module
Objective 1/Outcome 1.3
Handout 1

Determining Roles of the Assessment Team

Handout Instructions: For the purposes of this exercise, we will assume that the following list of people are involved in the assessment process of a LEP Chinese-speaking child. Attached is an alphabetically coded list of "Assessment Tasks." Using the codes, assign tasks to each member of the team. Keep in mind that more than one member of the team may need to be involved in a task, especially if translation services are required.

Assessment Team Members	Assessment Tasks
School Administrator:	
Parent:	
School Psychologist:	
School Nurse:	
School Speech Therapist:	
Resource Specialist:	
Classroom Teacher:	
Teacher's Aide:	
Interpreter/Translator:	
Outside Consultants: -Physician -Audiologist -Occupational Therapist	

Assessment Tasks

Below is a partial list of assessment tasks. Use the alphabetical code and assign these tasks to members of the assessment team. More than one person can be assigned to a task.

a. Serves as central information gathering point

b. Informs parents of need and purpose for interview

c. Secure parent release to secure medical information

d. Observes child in the home

e. Observes child in the classroom

f. Provides initial screening

g. Reports academic problem areas

h. Details progress in classroom program

i. Initiates referral for further assessment

j. Conducts assessment or tests in perceived problem area(s)

k. Meets with parents for interview

l. Arranges for interpreter/translator

m. Briefs interpreter/translator on interview and assessment needs

n. Sends pertinent information to outside consultants

o. Provides overall summary and interpretation of assessment and observation data

p. Meets with parents to discuss placement recommendations

q. Makes placement decision

r. Informs parents of their child's educational rights

Checklist For Selecting And Training Interpreters/Translators

Skill Area	Competencies
Languages Spoken	1. Speaks child's dialect fluently. 2. Knows regional differences in dialects, e.g. vocabulary differences between Mandarin spoken in Taiwan and the People's Republic of China. Fluent in English.
Translation Skills	1. Understands the difference between word-for-word translation and context translation. 2. Knows when English words do not have suitable Chinese equivalents. 3. Can translate accurately without omitting, adding, or changing intent of message through personal interpretation.
Assessment Skills	1. Has been trained in assessment procedures. 2. Knows how to provide instructions without additional verbal and non-verbal cues. 3. Knows how to record responses without cueing child as to correctness of response. 4. Knows when to ask assessor for further information. 5. Knows how to convey child's verbal responses to assessor, e.g. child used immature verbal response. 6. Knows how to present tasks. 7. Knows how to cue child with selected prompts or demonstration when needed. 8. Trained to observe more subtle aspects in child's response that can be valuable in interpreting results. 9. Knows which test items do not have Chinese equivalent either culturally or linguistically. 10. Can maintain confidentiality.

Checklist for Reviewing and Modifying Assessment Instruments

Review Assessment Procedures

1) Determine whether test administration requires translated verbal instructions.

2) If administration includes time limits, translation may require that you modify time limits.

3) If administration requires a combination of both verbal instructions and demonstration, determine whether it is feasible for the interpreter to do both. This will require training the interpreter to provide the appropriate number of cues.

4) If test items require verbal responses from the child, you should arrange to tape record the session. This will enable you to review the child's responses with the interpreter and assess appropriateness and complexity of the child's responses.

5) Provide a written form of the instructions to the interpreter, so she is prepared for the assessment. Go over general instructions, as well as individual items, to make sure the interpreter does not have questions regarding translation of terms.

Review Items and Materials Used for Cultural Bias

1) Review information on the child's background, including country of origin, socioeconomic level, and educational experiences.

2) Review items and materials used in the instrument(s) you will be using and mark items that may potentially be outside of the cultural experiences of the child, or which may be represented differently in the child's culture.

3) Carefully review adaptive behavior items for appropriateness. If you are interviewing parents on self-help eating and dressing skills, be sure to inquire about routines that may be more customary and within the expectations of that culture.

4) Items you should carefully review include those that require verbal or visual recognition of:

    - Household objects, such as furniture and kitchen utensils
    - Vehicle types, such as ambulance and police car
    - Sports equipment or actions, such as football scenes, archery, skiing, or tobogganing
    - Outdoor fixtures and building type, such as traffic signs, "skyscrapers," "ranches," and "bungalows"
    - Values represented by pictures, for example, "freedom," "honesty," "respect," or "creativity"
    - Professions, such as doctor, judge, and firefighter
    - Clothing, such as tuxedo, slippers vs. loafers, raincoats, galoshes, and suspenders
    - Historically related items, e.g. Pilgrim, Thanksgiving, and pioneer

You need not necessarily omit items such as the above. However, you should mark potentially biased items, carefully review how the child performed in those areas and then report these considerations accordingly in your interpretation of results.

Review Items That May Not be Suitable for Translation

1) Some items may not be suitable for translation because there is no Chinese equivalent for the English word.

2) In certain cases, the Chinese translation changes the level of complexity of the item.

3) Review and mark those items that may not be suitable for translation or which require careful review by an interpreter. You should review these items with a bilingual interpreter and be especially cautious if the interpreter indicates two or more Chinese words are needed to come up with an equivalent meaning. For example, descriptors or adjectives represented by pictures, (such as degrees of emotion such as happy/elated,) might be described by the interpreter as "happy/very happy" in Chinese.

4) Some language tasks probe comprehension of more grammatically complex phrases. Trans lation to Chinese may not yield the same level of complexity, as grammatical structure of the Chinese language is very different.

Determine if the Overall Test Will Yield Adequate Data

Having marked items which may need to be omitted or altered, consider whether these modifications will affect the usefulness of the entire instrument. If your instrument contains only a small number of items being probed, and many of those items are potentially inappropriate for the LEP child, you should consider using another instrument.

Determine if Two or More Instruments are Needed

If you feel the instrument you have selected will still leave "gaps" in data collection, consider the use of two or more instruments probing the same area. You may want to include non-verbal tools, such as the Draw-A-Person Test, but not to the exclusion of instruments that more fully assess all areas of functioning and modalities. Do not assume that instruments or subtests probing only non-verbal areas are sufficient.

Determine "Qualified" Normative Data

If you have modified the instrument, you will need to modify how you report results and scores. While you may not be able to report conclusive IQ scores or mental ages, provided you have collected sufficient information, you should be able to report some approximation of age level functioning along with a report of test modifications that qualify those findings.

For example, if the child missed many of the items which you had previously marked as potentially biased, omit those items from the total number of items and prorate the child's score based on this new total. Compare the difference between the original score in which all items are included and your modified score. Your summary should discuss other data gleaned from teacher and parent reports and observation that substantiate your findings.

Assessment Instrument Worksheet

Name Of Instrument: ______________________________

Type/Purpose: ______________________________

In the space below, indicate those items that you would mark as requiring modification of the following reasons as coded:

PB = potentially biased
RT = requires translation
NT = not suitable for translation
SC = substitute with parallel competency from child's culture

Area Assessed/Item	Modifications Needed

Total Number Of Items In This Instrument: ______________
Number Of Items That Are Coded PB: ______________
Number Of Items That Are Coded RT: ______________
Number Of Items That Are Coded NT: ______________
Number Of Items That Are Coded SC: ______________

Based on your findings:

1. Do you feel this instrument will serve its intended purpose?

2. Do you feel this instrument will provide adequate information for:
   a. Initial Screening: _____yes _____no _____ not applicable
   b. IQ or Mental Age: _____yes _____no _____ not applicable
   c. Placement recommendation:

      ____yes ____no ____not applicable
   d. IEP recommendations: ____yes ____no ____not applicable
   e. Other: ______________________________

Factors That Can Lead to Alternative Interpretations

After you have observed the child and documented the context of those observed behaviors, you will need to look at those factors that may explain why those behaviors are present. Some of those factors may indicate that more investigation is needed to fully understand the child's behavior, particularly if problems are evident. Understanding the source of those behaviors can provide you with the right interpretation, and also the right recommendations.

Your interpretation of observed behavior should consider these four factors:

- Acculturation Difficulties
- Handicapping Conditions
- Health or Medical Problem
- Social-Emotional Factors

In discussing these factors in more detail, let's take a hypothetical example of an observed behavior. We will assume that you have observed a child who appears to have "poor visual and verbal attending skills." Among your many observations, you noted the following:

When the teacher was providing instructions on a scissors and paper fine-motor activity, you observed the child attempting to manipulate the scissors, rather than listening to the verbal instructions and demonstration. On another occasion, when all the children were taking turns identifying shapes on a board, the LEP child was observed to be watching peers rather than the activity. The teacher was observed to call the child's name several times before the child responded.

Let's now consider how these examples of observed behavior may have alternative interpretations, depending on what you find to be related factors.

Acculturation Difficulties

If the child has recently immigrated and has been in the classroom for a short period of time, she may be adjusting to the new environment.

- The child may not be familiar with some of the materials you present. In our example, this child may be unfamiliar with the type of scissors presented to him. The novelty of new experiences may causedistraction from other areas, such as the teacher's verbal instructions.

or

- The child may not be proficient in English, and therefore does not attend to verbal instructions that now sound meaningless to him. If the child does not understand directions or what is expected of him, he may watch peers to gain clues.

or

- Some recent immigrant children are given new names in lieu of their Chinese ones. The child may not readily recognize his new American name nor a teacher's different pronunciation of his Chinese name.

Of course, to determine whether these cultural factors apply, you will need to do further investigation. This may include parent interviews concerning the child's prior educational experiences. It may necessitate observation over a period of time to see how the child is adjusting to the classroom. Finally, you may also wish to observe the child performing similar activities presented with Chinese instructions.

If cultural factors are definitely part of this child's behavioral profile, your recommendations to help this child overcome poor attending skills will include ways to help the child adjust more quickly to the classroom.

Handicapping Conditions

If the child has a handicapping condition, such as auditory and/ or visual perceptual deficits, her poor attending skills may indeed be a reflection of this problem.

- The child may be perceptually "overwhelmed" when presented with both materials and verbal instructions. In this example, the child prefers to focus on the object, which she can both see and manipulate.

or

- The child may have difficulties recognizing visual shapes due to visual perceptual deficits. The level of this task may be too difficult with the result that she tunes out and focuses on something more interesting — in this case, peers.

or

- The child may not readily respond to two competing stimuli because of a figure-ground auditory processing problem. The child may be listening and watching peers answering the teacher's questions, yet not readily process that her name is being called when her attention is focused elsewhere.

- If learning deficits or handicapping conditions are the source of the child's poor attending skills, your recommendations should subsequently determine ways that may best help remediate these problems. However, in order to determine whether handicapping conditions are the cause of the problem, further investigation must be undertaken through assessment of these problem areas, parent interview, or additional observations.

Health or Medical Problems

If health or medical problems (such as hearing loss or visual impairment) are factors, this would certainly explain poor attending skills. Children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may not have had routine hearing and vision screening. Chronic ear infections may also be a source of temporary hearing loss.

Hearing and vision screenings should be routine with any child suspected of having auditory or visual attending deficits. If such problems turn out to be the case, your recommendations will also need to include ways for the teacher, therapist, and possibly, peers to help the child develop newly found auditory or visual skills.

Social-Emotional Factors

If the child is undergoing social-emotional problems, she may indeed exhibit poor attending skills. Children who are depressed, for example, may appear listless, unmotivated, and thus, inattentive. It is important to remember that some recent immigrant children may have undergone extremely difficult situations, drastic changes, and perhaps economic hardships. The child may come from a family that is struggling to survive. She may be expected to help out after school, so that opportunities to develop friendships are limited. If the child is doing poorly in school, she may be suffering from low self-esteem and perhaps family pressures to do better. The reasons for social-emotional problems are many, and such problems have been found in Chinese American children with greater frequency than in their Caucasian counterparts.

Determining whether social-emotional problems are factors requires sensitivity on your part in interviewing parents, observing the child in the classroom, and assessing the child in those areas. If these factors turn out to be the case, your recommendations should include a plan to counsel both the child and parents, and to find ways in which teachers and peers can help the child feel more confident or comfortable within the classroom.

Workshop Activity 1

Example of Observed Behavior

Ms. Smith passes out crayons and sheets of paper with various geometric shapes. In English, she instructs the class to color all circles red and all squares blue. As the class begins the assignment, you notice that Chang, an LEP Chinese-speaking child, is watching classmates before beginning his work. You later notice him copying what the classmate seated next to him is doing.

What Might Be Factors In Chang's Observed Behavior?

Acculturation Factors:

Example: If Chang does not understand English verbal instructions and is reluctant to ask questions, he may rely on watching peers to determine what's expected of him. Chang also may not be aware that this is an independent activity.

Handicapping Conditions:

If Chang has visual-perceptual problems, the combination of having to use both shape and color discrimination skills may be too complex a task for him. He may be watching peers and copying work to gain additional clues -- or perhaps because this is the only way he can complete this assignment without additional help.

Health or Medical Problem:

If Chang has a hearing loss, he may not have heard the verbal instructions. He may be attempting to get non-auditory clues to the activity by watching peers.

Social-Emotional Problems:

If Chang has a "fear of failure," he may not feel confident of his ability to perform the task correctly. He may be watching a peer who generally does good work, in hopes that he can gain additional clues to do a better job.

What Activities Would You Propose to Help the Child

If this behavior is related to Acculturation Factors, I would suggest the following:

- Meet with Chang individually, with an interpreter, if necessary, to find ways to make it easier for him to ask questions when he is confused.
- Structure classroom activities so that verbal instructions can be easily accompanied by demonstration by aides.
- Encourage the use of more appropriate peer modeling, perhaps one in which a peer seated next to Chang verbalize what he is doing.
- Give praise to other peers that ask questions, so that Chang is not reluctant to do so, too.

If this behavior is related to Handicapping Conditions, I would suggest the following:

- Structure classroom activities so that an aide can work with Chang and provide additional clues for approaching this task, e.g. going through and first coloring all the circles red, then coloring the squares blue.
- Divide the class into smaller groups. In Chang's group, have all the children "draw" the circular shape with their finger, before proceeding with coloring them in. Do the same with squares. (c) Encourage more appropriate peer modeling by dividing the class into groups of two. Each group completes the task together.

If this behavior is related to Health or Medical Problems, I would suggest the following:

- Obtain an audiological evaluation, treatment and therapy, if indicated.
- Obtain a vision screening so that Chang can be prescribed corrective lenses. if indicated.
- Have Chang's health checked, and determine if sleeping or eating habits have changed recently.
- Work with both parents and Chang's pediatrician, if health problems are suspected.

If this behavior is related to Social-Emotional Problems, I would suggest the following:

- Meet with Chang's parents and discuss related problems in the home and ways to help Chang resolve them.
- Meet with Chang individually to discuss expectations, e.g. provide encouragement to ask questions and get additional help.
- Offer praise for many aspects of classroom participation, e.g. asking questions, being attentive, being cooperative, finishing work neatly.

Workshop Activity 2

Example of Observed Behavior

Mr. Smith tells his class that they will spend the next half hour doing independent study. All the children, except Chang, an LEP Chinese-speaking child, take out books or papers and begin working. Chang only begins work when Mr. Smith suggests that he read a book.

What Might Be Factors In Chang's Observed Behavior?

1. Acculturation Factors: ______________________________
2. Handicapping Conditions: ______________________________
3. Health Or Medical Problems: ______________________________
4. Social-Emotional Problem: ______________________________

What Activities Would You Propose to Help the Child?

1. If this behavior is related to Acculturation Factors, I would suggest the following:
2. If this behavior is related to Handicapping Conditions, I would suggest the following:
3. If this behavior is related to Health Or Medical Problems, I would suggest the following:
4. If this behavior is related to Social-Emotional Problems, I would suggest the following:

Workshop Activity 3

Example of Observed Behavior

Chang was observed on several occasions to do slow, deliberate work when writing in the classroom. He seldom completes writing activities within the assigned period. On one occasion, the class was asked to print their first and last names five times. Chang made four attempts to write his name, crossed out his attempts with a big "x" when he made a mistake and then started over again. After frequently referring to the lettering examples on the bulletin board, Chang finally wrote his name once within the time allotted for this activity.

What Might Be Factors In Chang's Observed Behavior?

1. Acculturation Factors: ____________________
2. Handicapping Conditions: ____________________
3. Health or Medical Problems: ____________________
4. Social-Emotional Problem: ____________________

What Activities Would You Propose To Help The Child?

1. If this behavior is related to Acculturation Factors, I would suggest the following:
2. If this behavior is related to Handicapping Conditions, I would suggest the following:
3. If this behavior is related to Health or Medical Problems, I would suggest the following:
4. If this behavior is related to Social-Emotional Problems, I would suggest the following:

Workshop Activity 4

Example of Observed Behavior

In her bilingual classroom, Ms. Wong noted that Chang, a new Chinese- speaking student in her 6th grade classroom, failed to turn in completed homework assignments five times in a row. Ms. Wong spoke to Chang about the problem and noted that he seemed "ashamed." Ms. Wong reports that Chang is generally cooperative and completes assignments given in the classroom.

What Might Be Factors In Chang's Observed Behavior?

1. Acculturation Factors: __________
2. Handicapping Conditions: __________
3. Health or Medical Problems: __________
4. Social-Emotional Problem: __________

What Activities Would You Propose To Help The Child?

1. If this behavior is related to Acculturation Factors, I would suggest the following:
2. If this behavior is related to Handicapping Conditions, I would suggest the following:
3. If this behavior is related to Health Or Medical Problems, I would suggest the following:
4. If this behavior is related to Social-Emotional Problems, I would suggest the following:

Workshop Activity 5

Example of Observed Behavior

Chang appears to be able to follow written instructions more easily than verbal instructions. The examiner noted that when the teacher gave simple verbal instructions to put their books away and take out pencils and paper, Chang did not readily respond until he noted what other students were doing. Later, however, Chang was able to follow relatively more complex instructions written on the board without looking to peers for clues.

What Might Be Factors In Chang's Observed Behavior?

1. Acculturation Factors: __________
2. Handicapping Conditions: __________
3. Health or Medical Problems: __________
4. Social-Emotional Problem: __________

What Activities Would You Propose To Help The Child?

1. If this behavior is related to Acculturation Factors, I would suggest the following:
2. If this behavior is related to Handicapping Conditions, I would suggest the following:
3. If this behavior is related to Health or Medical Problems, I would suggest the following:
4. If this behavior is related to Social-Emotional Problems, I would suggest the following:

Workshop Activity 6

Example Of Observed Behavior

Chang appears to have difficulties with tasks involving abstract concepts. During a classification activity, Chang was asked, "How are a dog and cat similar?" Chang was unable to respond, until the teacher repeated the question while pointing to pictures. Chang then responded, "They both have four legs." Similarly, during another activity teaching functions to objects, the teacher asked, "What do we do with a fork?" Chang responded, "Wash it."

What Might Be Factors In Chang's Observed Behavior?

1. Acculturation Factors: ____________________
2. Handicapping Conditions: ____________________
3. Health or Medical Problems: ____________________
4. Social-Emotional Problem: ____________________

What Activities Would You Propose To Help The Child?

1. If this behavior is related to Acculturation Factors, I would suggest the following: ____________________
2. If this behavior is related to Handicapping Conditions, I would suggest the following: ____________________
3. If this behavior is related to Health or Medical Problems, I would suggest the following: ____________________
4. If this behavior is related to Social-Emotional Problems, I would suggest the following: ____________________

Workshop Activity 7

Example of Observed Behavior

Chang does not always assert himself with third grade classmates. On one occasion, the examiner noted that a peer pushed Chang out of the lunch line and Chang did not object but retreated to the end of the line. His teachers report that Chang allows peers to take his personal belongings, such as pencils and lunch money—without protest. On another occasion, a group of older boys surrounded Chang and laughed at his choice of clothes. Chang did not respond verbally and he did not attempt to move away from the group until a teacher intervened.

What Might Be Factors In Chang's Observed Behavior?

1. Acculturation Factors: ______________________________
2. Handicapping Conditions: ______________________________
3. Health or Medical Problems: ______________________________
4. Social-Emotional Problem: ______________________________

What Activities Would You Propose To Help The Child?

1. If this behavior is related to Acculturation Factors, I would suggest the following: ______________________________
2. If this behavior is related to Handicapping Conditions, I would suggest the following: ______________________________
3. If this behavior is related to Health or Medical Problems, I would suggest the following: ______________________________
4. If this behavior is related to Social-Emotional Problems, I would suggest the following: ______________________________

Workshop Activity 8

Example of Observed Behavior

The school nurse noted that five year old Chang seems to have a poor appetite. At lunchtime, he often picks at his food and refuses to drink his milk. Sometimes, he eats only a bite or two of his meal, usually because his teacher says he must before he can leave the lunch table. In spite of his poor eating habits, Chang does not appear unusually thin or malnourished.

What Might Be Factors In Chang's Observed Behavior?

1. Acculturation Factors: ______

2. Handicapping Conditions: ______

3. Health or Medical Problems: ______

4. Social-Emotional Problem: ______

What Activities Would You Propose To Help The Child?

1. If this behavior is related to Acculturation Factors, I would suggest the following: ______

2. If this behavior is related to Handicapping Conditions, I would suggest the following: ______

3. If this behavior is related to Health or Medical Problems, would suggest the following: ______

4. If this behavior is related to Social-Emotional Problems, I would suggest the following: ______

Workshop Activity 9

Example of Observed Behavior

Seven year old Chang often arrives at school tired, sleepy, irritable, and lethargic. His bilingual teacher reports that Chang fell asleep three times, twice during a morning story time, another time on the lawn area at lunch recess. His teacher reports that his attention span during group activities seems to fluctuate from day to day.

What Might Be Factors In Chang's Observed Behavior?

1. Acculturation Factors: ____________________
2. Handicapping Conditions: ____________________
3. Health or Medical Problems: ____________________
4. Social-Emotional Problems: ____________________

What Activities Would You Propose To Help The Child?

1. If this behavior is related to Acculturation Factors, I would suggest the following:
2. If this behavior is related to Handicapping Conditions, I would suggest the following:
3. If this behavior is related to Health Or Medical Problems, I would suggest the following:
4. If this behavior is related to Social-Emotional Problems, I would suggest the following:

Case Study 1: Raymond

Child's name: Raymond Chan (Note: this is not the child's real name.)
Birthday: 2-28-77
Chronological Age: 6 years 3 months

Reason for Referral

Raymond's teacher, Mrs. Betty Smith, initiated the referral for an assessment. Raymond, age 6 years 3 months, is completing his first year of school in the regular Kindergarten classroom. Mrs. Smith is concerned that Raymond is not progressing well in the regular classroom. An assessment is needed at this time to determine appropriate placement and services for Raymond for the coming school year.

Health Factors

Vision and hearing were evaluated 8-82 and were found to be normal. Raymond is described as a healthy child who was full term at birth and who has had no reported major illnesses. Medical information was obtained through Raymond's parents. It was explained that all written medical reports are not in this country. Innoculations are current.

Interpreter/Translator Information

Mrs. Helen Woo, Bilingual Chinese Consultant for American School District, served as interpreter during the parent interview, one-to-one child interviews and during administration of educational and developmental tests. Translation was for English-Cantonese.

Family Background

Raymond is the youngest of three children and the only boy born to Cantonese-speaking Chinese American parents now living in a low economic area in Chinatown, San Francisco. Mr. Chan's 70 year old mother also lives with the family and cares for Raymond in the afternoon until the parents return home from work. The Chan's arrived in the United States approximately 18 months ago from Hong Kong, and Raymond was enrolled in Kindergarten at the start of the next school year. Mr. Chan is a stock clerk in a grocery store and Mrs. Chan works part-time as a seamstress in Chinatown. Both parent speak, read and understand some English, although the entire interview was conducted in Cantonese.

Raymond's two sisters are 8 and 10 years of age. Both are enrolled in public schools and attend a church-sponsored Chinese Language School four nights a week. The Chans stated that next year Raymond will also attend Chinese School, in addition to public school. Parents report Cantonese is spoken in the home, although the two girls sometimes converse with each other in English.The Chans did not express any concerns about Raymond's development. They reported that developmental milestones seemed normal. Mrs. Chan reported that Raymond walked at 14 months and began using single words to name objects at 16 months. They reported -- and the examiner observed -- that Raymond was quite active and verbal at home. He alternated between watching a "Sesame Street" program and manipulating a wooden "choo-choo" train around an imaginary track. He responded to parent requests in Cantonese to turn down the TV set and to bring the examiner and interpreter some cookies and soft drinks.

Raymond reportedly has a few Chinese-speaking friends, both of whom are one to two years younger than Raymond.

Educational Background

Prior to coming to the United States, Raymond had not attended any public schools or daycare programs. During infancy and early childhood, day care was provided by his grandmother and older siblings.

Except for quarterly achievement tests given in his Kindergarten program, Raymond has not been previously assessed. According to his teacher, Raymond's progress has been slow. He has only mastered rudimentary English language skills and seldom uses English voluntarily in the classroom or on the playground. He can name a few objects, respond to simple social questions posed by peers, but does not appear to have sufficient language skills to participate fully in classroom activities. He frequently does not respond when called upon in class.

Mrs. Smith also has some concerns about Raymond's development in other areas as well. For example, he has not yet learned names of colors and has difficulties in both reciting the alphabet and copying letters. She feels that motivation may be a factor, since Raymond is often unwilling to engage in unfamiliar activities. But she is also concerned that Raymond's slow rate of learning may also suggest problems other than language-related ones.

Classroom and Individual Observation

Classroom observations were made on two separate occasions, once in the morning and once in the afternoon. On both occasions, Raymond was observed to interact with Chinese-speaking classmates, speaking in Cantonese while they played with toy trucks and a model gas station. During a classroom activity, the examiner observed Raymond watching classmates participating in an oral exercise to practice letter sounds, but Raymond would not take his turn when the teacher called upon him. Later, during a coloring and lettering task, Raymond watched a classmate and copied what he did.

Although the Chan family lives only two blocks from the school, it was observed and confirmed by the teacher that Mr. Chan walks Raymond to school each day. In addition, his grandmother or 10 year old sister stops by each afternoon to walk him home.Raymond always greets his grandmother and sister enthusiastically by showing them pictures or other papers he had worked on that day in school. To observe Raymond's learning style, Raymond was later taken out of the classroom for small group interaction and observation with two classmates. The examiner explained that the children were to point to a red object in the room when they heard "I see something red," and to point to a blue object when they heard "I see something blue." At first, Raymond's friends had to translate and help him point out objects. After three trials, Raymond was able to independently point to objects by color without seeking help from peers. He occasionally used the words "red" and "blue" while pointing to objects.

One-to-One Interview

Next, Raymond was observed during an individual interview session with Mrs. Woo conducting the interview, while the examiner observed. When the interpreter first asked Raymond questions in English, he kept his head down, avoided eye contact, and did not respond. The interpreter then asked the same questions in Cantonese, e.g. Where do you live? What is your teacher's name? At first, Raymond responded somewhat hesitantly in Cantonese. He later relaxed and responded easily to a variety of questions. Based on Raymond's generally observed skills in conversing easily with adults in Cantonese, his ability to relate several sequenced events when asked "What do you like to do at home?" ("Play with my friends, watch TV and eat candy."), his Chinese language skills appear to approximate his age of 6-3.

Test Results

Bilingual Syntax Measure - Levels I and II: This test was administered as pre-test to determine Raymond's level of English functioning and ability to respond to other tests items presented in English. On the BSM, Raymond succeeded at Level I, but failed at Level II. His responses consisted primarily of single words and he spoke little English.

Bender Gestalt: The Bender was administered to assess Raymond's level of visual motor development and to assess the presence of possible neurological or emotional factors. An interpreter was used to provide both test instructions and administer portions of the test with the supervision of this examiner. Raymond's performance in the translated version of this test revealed he is functioning within the average range.

Leiter International Performance Scale: The Leiter was administered to assess strengths and weaknesses in several developmental areas. Since items on this test can be administered non-verbally, the interpreter/ translator was not used. Raymond's responses fell within the average range.

Wide Range Achievement Test and Pearbody Pictures Vocabulary Test: The WRAT and PPVT were administered to determine current skills essential for Raymond's functioning within the classroom setting. On the WRAT, Raymond demonstrated arithmetic achievement levels approximating grade level appropriate for age. When the PPVT was administered in English, Raymond scored at the 3-1 range, with scattered successes to the 4-5 year range. The test was then readministered with the help of the Cantonese interpreter. The item, "caboose" was eliminated from the sample, since this word translates as "end train," thus simplifying the level of complexity of this item. Results from administering the PPVT in Cantonese indicates Raymond's level of vocabulary recognition is age level appropriate.

Boehm Test of Basic Concepts:

The Boehm was administered by the interpreter in Cantonese for purposes of assessing relative cognitive strengths and weaknesses. Raymond made no errors on time concepts; he erred once in the miscellaneous category, several times on spatial concepts, and six times on quantity concepts. While most of his responses fell within normal age ranges, it should be noted that Raymond's level of interest during these tasks began to wane toward the end of the session. While he remained generally cooperative, his loss of interest was suggested by his tendency to randomly guess at the correct response without carefully viewing the task before him.

Summary of Strengths And Weakness:

Based on observations and findings from tests, Raymond appears to have average potential. In terms of actual functioning, he clearly performs at a superior level when items and tasks are presented in Cantonese, as was revealed in dual administrations of the PPVT.

Raymond's English vocabulary skills, on the other hand, have not progressed to a stage as to be adequate for classroom comprehension of directions and learning activities. To some degree, some lag in English vocabulary skills is expected with recent immigrant children. But of concern, is Raymond's apparent disinterest in learning new English skills. He does not participate willingly in group activities, although he seems more encouraged to do so when assisted by peers.

In part, Raymond's lack of motivation in learning English skills may relate to his current environmental "support". Raymond selectively seeks out peers who are Chinese-speaking and allows his friends to translate for him. His friends at home are younger Cantonese-speaking children. Raymond is cared for by his Cantonese-speaking grandmother and Cantonese is spoken in the home by other family members as well. In addition, Raymond will be attending Cantonese Language School next year.

In summary, then this 6 year 3 month Chinese American boy appears to be functioning at least at age level in all areas, except verbal and receptive areas in English. His functional level of skills in English fluctuates between 3-2 and 4-5 in receptive language areas. By observation, his expressive language skills in English are somewhat lower and this may be mediated by the fact that he is unwilling to speak English in the classroom. Raymond seldom responds to questions directed to him with more than one word.

Workshop Activity

1. **Based on these findings, what recommendations would you make for placement?**

2. **If Raymond were to remain in this classroom, what recommendations would you make for him?**

A. How can the teacher structure activities to help Raymond learn English?

B. How can peers help Raymond learn classroom expectations?

C. How can parents assist Raymond in the home?

D. Other recommendations:

Case Study II: May

Name: May Fong (Note: This is not the child's real name.)
Age: 15

Tests Administered:

Bilingual Syntax Measure Levels I and II, Bender Gestalt, Leiter International Performance Scale, Wide Range Achievement Test, Wepman Auditory Discrimination Test, Selected Subtests of the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities, Tinloy Cantonese Auditory Discrimination Test.

Interpreter Information:

Mrs. Chan, Bilingual Chinese Education teacher at Winston Junior High School interpreted in the Cantonese dialect during the parent/guardian and student interviews and meetings. Mrs. Chan also interpreted during administration of all tests.

Reason for Referral:

May, age 15, has been in this country for two years. As compared to other immigrant Chinese children who have been here an approximately equivalent amount of time, she has failed to progress.

Interview:

May is living with an aunt and uncle. Her parents remained in Hong Kong when May and her elderly grandmother, who also lives in the same household, immigrated here. Although the background information obtained from the aunt, Mrs. Fong, was vague, May reportedly attended school in Hong Kong but could not progress beyond the primary grades. According to the Aunt, May's health history has been unremarkable.

Observation:

When May and the aunt first arrived at the office, May appeared somewhat apprehensive. She did not make eye contact when spoken to. After a brief period she became quite sociable, talking freely about herself, her mother and her school experiences. She spoke in Chinese. The interpreter explained that May's manner of speaking seemed more adult than that of a teenager. Her expressions suggested that she has spent much of her life with older elderly people. Mrs. Fong confirmed that May had spent much of her time with her grandmother.

Test Results:

Bilingual Syntax Measure Level I and Level II: These instruments were used as pretests to determine May's English language proficiency prior to administering the following selected test battery. Her performance here indicated that she was at the beginning of Level II, i.e., A Limited English Proficient student, who as yet does not use English as a vehicle of significant communication, but could use some common English words and phrases spontaneously. May could also repeat short sentences and questions.

Bender Gestalt: May's Bender figures showed problems with integration. Her performance here suggests some visual motor deficits.

Leiter International Performance Scale: May earned an age equivalent score of 10-3 on this non-verbal test. Her basal age was VI and her ceiling was at the XIV level. May's last two successful responses both required ability to deal with visual abstract concepts (Age XII task 4, classification of animals and Age XVI task 2, analogies designs). Thus on tasks which required no verbal or auditory skills but a great deal of visual conceptualizing, she was successful in some tasks which were almost at age level.

Wide Range Achievement Test: On the WRAT reading test, May could recognize only three words in the Level I group. She was able to do simple two place addition and one place subtraction problems. Her score here was at the grade 3.0 level. When asked to spell, she shook her head, indicating that she could not spell, or did not wish to attempt the spelling task, (reading and spelling tests were administered in English). She would write her name in English and although hesitantly, she wrote her Chinese name also.

Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities: The ITPA was not normed on LEP Chinese-speaking children, thus scores obtained during testing are considered invalid. Since May could not work with the English version of the ITPA, a profile of her strengths and weaknesses was obtained by adapting the tasks in Chinese. Although the ITPA is for children only up to age 10-3, May's level of functioning appeared sufficiently low so that this instrument was used to help gain a clearer picture of her learning style. Because of the language barrier and her inability to adapt to the English language, the Auditory Closure and Sound Blending subtests were omitted. Another reason for omitting those subtests was that Chinese words are monosyllabic and words such as "telephone" or "hospital" are made up of many syllables. Presenting these items in separate words does not provide sufficient clues for the subject to succeed. The Grammatic Closure Subtest was not attempted because of the absence of plural words in the Chinese language. For instance, May would have had to say "John belongs" and "two dress" to describe the possessive and the plural nouns "John's" and "dresses".

In terms of May's overall ITPA profile, her strengths seemed to be in her ability to understand auditorily presented stimuli, to verbally and manually express herself, and to visually recognize objects common to her environment (visual discrimination). Her score was at approximately midpoint, (in terms of her profile) in ability to grasp the meaning of visual symbols (Visual Reception Subtest). May's weaknesses were in her ability to grasp auditorily and visually presented stimuli which called for ability to abstract. Her ability for immediate recall of auditorily and visually presented material (difficulty in leaning new tasks) was also weak.

Wepman Auditory Discrimination Test:
Tinloy Cantonese Auditory Discrimination Test: On the Wepman, May erred 20 times out of 40 word pairs presented. Her errors include 8 beginning sound word pairs, 10 ending sound word pairs, 1 middle sound word pair, and 1 same word pairs. On the Tinloy Cantonese Test, May erred 3 times out of the 40 word pairs. Her errors included 2 beginning sound word pairs and 1 ending sound word pair.

Tinloy Cantonese Auditory Discrimination Test: On the Tinloy Cantonese Test, May erred 3 times out of the 40 word pairs. Her errors included 2 beginning sound word pairs and 1 ending sound word pair.

May's performance on the Wepman and Tinloy tests suggests that she has problems recognizing the subtle differences of unfamiliar English word sounds. Her errors on the Tinloy test were minimal.

Summary of Findings:

May, age 15, has been in this country for two years. As compared to other immigrant Chinese children who have been here an equal amount of time, May has failed to progress at an equivalent rate in school, She could sight read only a few words and could not spell. Her language barrier, combined with learning disabilities (perhaps even resistance to adapting a new language) complicate the task of educating May.

Activity:

What recommendation should be made?

What alternatives should be used?